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CATHOLIC UNION:

ESSAYS TOWARDS A

CHURCH OF THE FUTURE,

AS THE

ORGANIZATION OF PHILANTHROPY.

BY

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CATHOLIC UNION.

§ 1. Idea of Catholicity.

The Roman Church has always laid claim to be commensurate with the whole human race, and nothing has more induced largehearted persons to cling to her communion than this idea of Catholicity. Since Protestantism has been fully revealed to Europe, its scandal and blot has been in the divisions of its professors. Its progress in Germany was ruined, and the Thirty Years' War made possible, by the mutual enmities of Lutheran and Calvinist. In Great Britain it was weakened and imperilled, and the civil war caused, by the attempt to enforce Episcopalianism on Scotland and suppress Puritanism in England. Since toleration has been established, many have been the sighs after a comprehensive church, many the attempts made by seceders to establish churches truly catholic. Yet all have failed; nor is it difficult to see why. Every Protestant church hitherto has attempted to take *theological truth* as its foundation; while the very point on which good men are at variance is, *what is* theological truth. One man must have the doctrines of the Trinity and Atonement enforced in his church, because they are "the truth;" another is willing to admit

Trinitarians, as individuals, but cannot endure the enforcement of their doctrine, because he believes it to be false. One *must* have, another *will not* have, Baptismal Regeneration, or Episcopal power to remit sins, or Predestination, or an Eternal Hell, or Original Sin, or an Authoritative Church, or an Infallible Bible. Thus Protestantism has legitimately worked out the result, that, in our present stage of ignorances and prejudices, all free churches must be sectarian. A national church (so called) is likely to be a large sect, but a sect it is, and generally one of a very arrogant and obstructive kind.

Two questions now arise. 1. How ought the members of different churches to feel and act towards one another? 2. Ought we to abandon the idea of Catholicity as a dream?

The former question has much similarity to that concerning Nationalities. In times of confusion and violence, every rude and strong people endeavours to extend its sway over its neighbours; and every successful power begins to dream of Universal Empire. The word Empire probably excited in Charlemagne, as the word Church in the Popes and in many a Protestant prelate, a belief of his right to universal obedience. But the resistance of man, claiming equal rights with man, gradually teaches nations that universal sway is impossible, and that each nation must submit to co-ordination with others. Before this stage is reached, each is seeking the destruction and absorption of the rest; no moral relationship of nationalities is conceded. But after each is convinced that all have an equal right to existence, moral action between them becomes possible and commences.

So too, as long as different churches are under the delusion that they have, each of them, a divine right to command the obedience of the rest, they remain in implacable hostility, and no moral relations can exist. It is said that persons afflicted with monomania are sometimes cured by

mere juxtaposition, since each sees the error of the other in so vivid and ludicrous a light. Something of the kind has gone on among Protestants. Members of different churches see that a claim which is made by all over all is selfdestructive; that no church has any divine guarantee of infallibility; that therefore no one has any power or right authoritatively to declare "the truth;" and that it is pride, misanthropy and folly in a church to disown other churches, just as in a nation to disown other nations, or a man other men. In short, thousands of us have learned, that though *as a matter of convenience* separate churches or sects must exist, yet each sect ought to be in friendly relations to every other, and moreover ought to desire that every other may perfect its best fruit, so that each may learn whatever another has to teach.

It is true, that few Christians who have any zeal at all for their creed can contemplate complacently any moral relations with a Mussulman mosque or Jewish synagogue. Yet there is no halting place for a truthseeker between this conclusion and the narrowest bigotry; and it is probable that those who read these pages will need no proof that *it is* bigotry to lay down that Unitarians or Mussulmans or Jews cannot be *good men*. We cannot worship with Mussulmans nor with Jews, any more than with Romish priests, if we disbelieve the substance of their prayers or the sanctity of their emblems; but we nevertheless may wish that they all, and all men, may have the free exercise of their religion, presuming it to contain nothing immoral; and that all religious communities may maintain friendly relations with all others, again supposing the others to act morally. Yet I do not imagine this to be any way possible, towards *those* religious communities which preach their own divine right: for this is to proclaim war against the rest, and makes amity impossible.

But now recurs the other question,—Are we to abandon as a dream the idea of Catholicity? Rather, have we not laid a new foundation for that idea, from the day in which we have begun to recognize, as in moral amity with us, other churches, having different tenets from ours? Hereby we admit *moral union* in spite of *ecclesiastical separation.* Indeed, to deny the propriety of this is inhuman, and is almost unimaginable in those who have renounced the principle of persecution. If it is not right to treat a man as a felon, because he has what we think to be a false creed, we must treat him as an innocent fellow-citizen; in other words, we must be in moral relations with him. It is true, these relations need not be intimate. We cannot associate with many, nor directly cooperate with many; and we need to select our coadjutors. I do not expect or hope that men will follow the results of their theories to the sacrifice of their prejudices. Still, in spite of reaction towards forms and creeds, the winning principle of the Age seems to be this: *The Moral is higher than the Ecclesiastical.* We are learning that right creeds are but means of becoming *better men;* and that goodness (in the truest sense) is the end proposed; and we have daily proof that persons who agree with us more minutely in theological creed are by no means always so trustworthy in various virtues as others who differ from us. The true union between man and man in the highest and closest human friendship turns on a reciprocal trust in one another's virtue; and thousands are become so sick at heart of the pretensions of creeds, that they often ask, whether the union of *good men, as such,* is for ever to be impossible. This question is nothing but the aspiring of the heart towards the true Church of the Future,—a union of those who look on that part of man, in which he is said to be like to GOD, as his best and noblest; and who dedicate themselves to the cultivation of this.

Such a catholic union would have no religious creed whatever: and so far from bearing within it the sectarian principle of Protestantism, it would embrace Jews, Turks, Arabs, Hindoos, Chinese,—Christians, Theists, Pantheists and Atheists,—whenever they were sincere, and personally virtuous. They might retain their religious distinctions, like the "Orders" in the Church of Rome: yet in the contact of friendliness the stronger element would attract and gradually overpower the weaker, exactly as we see in scientific truth. As the doctrine of Ptolemy was superseded by that of Copernicus, and Copernicus was swallowed up in Newton, so will it be in regard to religions, when that misanthropic and pernicious bigotry is tamed, which continues to disgrace the theory of Christianity and the practice of so many of its professors. Those who believe their creed likely to win proselytes by closer contact, will rejoice in the breaking down of the barriers by which at present every sect in its turn fortifies itself against the access of argument and evidence. One who is confident in the truth of his own creed ought to be anxious that it may have friendly opportunity to diffuse its light; and one who has weak convictions ought to feel it absurd to shut out other men's light. Only, let that chicanery and crookedness be excluded, which fanaticism and worldly interest propagate. Indeed, they will exclude themselves by their overweening pretensions.

Knowing, as I do, that many hearts and minds are brooding over the questions, "Ought not the sense of Human Brotherhood to draw men together into a nobler and better church than has yet appeared? Is the time, or is it not, yet ripe?" I have thought it not unsuitable to offer my contribution towards the answer; which, in fact, takes one into the regions of Communism and of Politics, as departments of Morals. I believe Communism to be one mode in which human nature is crying out for a new and better union than

has yet been achieved. But what else are all the Philanthropic movements of this half century,—*against* Slavery, Cruel Punishments, Bad Jails, Intemperance,—and *for* Education, Health, Cleanliness, Relaxation,—what are they all but plain confessions that there is a vast class of duties and doctrines which the State cannot take in hand until public opinion has gone first, and on which the Church ought to form and gather public opinion, if she could; but she cannot, because she is theological and ecclesiastical, not purely moral. Few Christians are so bigoted as to refuse to co-operate with Jews, Turks, Infidels and Heretics to abate cholera and plague; many have learned to unite against slavery and intemperance. All these are but gropings and first steps in quest of a church of human brotherhood.

It is conceded,—by all who have renounced the theory of persecution,—that citizenship is a *moral,* not an ecclesiastical or theological, *union;* that a man may be a bad Christian, yet a valuable fellowcitizen, an honourable magistrate, a venerable king. The concession is no mere theory. In our Parliament and Cabinet men sit or may sit, who indeed call themselves Christians, but are not admitted to be so by the great Christian Churches. In our colonies the principle of religious equality is firmly establishing itself as a rule of politics. In India we have enacted that Mussulmans and Hindoos be admitted to the high offices of State equally with Christians. Thus, that social union which we call citizenship is effectually proclaimed to be independent of definite theological creeds; yet it is a union so sacred, and so full of moral moment, as to call, in extreme cases, for the mutual sacrifice of life. Indeed, we need not imagine merely possible events. From year to year the same field of battle is stained with the blood of the Sepoy and of the English soldier. When indeed their war is aggressive, I decline to use it as an argument here; but when, as in the Sikh invasion, they repel

foreign attack on Indian soil, they surely are not accomplices in crime, but brothers in righteous selfsacrifice. Those who are so animated by a common cause as to lay down life for it and for one another, confess a moral union of a very profound character, however intense their individual repugnances. And indeed, this it is that everywhere makes nationality overpower special creeds. It is not by an accident or unlucky blunder of politicians that the Catholic and the Protestant have been equalized in our legislature; but because the Catholic soldier was needful in our armies and his loyalty a delicate possession. The Turkish creed pays a severe penalty for its political exclusiveness in its comparative military weakness. When it feels the necessity of Christian soldiers, it will learn that nationality must emancipate itself from creeds. *We* have already learned this; and though the principle is not yet fully applied in detail, yet it is only a question of time.

But now, out of and beyond this, rises the new question, whether that particular *form* of cooperation adopted in the State *exhausts all the capabilities of our moral nature.* In truth, the question answers itself; that is, every Philanthropic movement of the past distinctly answers, *No.* Nor is the reason obscure. The State acts directly by compulsion and command; and to give efficacy to its enactments, they must be generally approved and not intrinsically impracticable. A process of enlightenment and persuasion needs to precede State-legislation. A rigorous and even military Executive which strictly abides by simple and good laws preenacted, will tend to the high prosperity of a country; but where, through the injustices perpetrated by conquest, and the blunders and complications of codes and statutes, the great disease of a country is in its Laws; where every bad law is, or is supposed to be, a source of gain and advantage, and a vested right, to influential persons and

parties;—here the chief service demanded of the Executive government is an improvement of the law, yet this is precisely the thing which is hardest to effect by direct effort. Every statesman will concede that West Indian Slavery could not have been abolished, had not the philanthropic associations laboured for thirty years previously. Illustrations very different in kind would be easy to give, but they are needless. I am here satisfied to insist, that every Christian, who, however firmly attached to his creed, approves of uniting with its rejectors in pursuing a philanthropic and moral object, (as Human Freedom, Improved Treatment of Criminals, Care of Orphans and of the Children of criminals, Reform of martial law and of the military oath,) every Christian, I say, so uniting concedes the principle, that a *voluntary* Moral Union with persons differing from him in creed may be highly expedient, and indeed *so* expedient as to become in certain cases his duty. It then becomes a question not of principle, but of detail, what should be the scope and duration of such union. If it is right *voluntarily* to associate for the extinction of Intemperance, for the introduction of Orphans into families, for the Shortening of the Hours of labour, for the Recovery of the Drowned,—in as many different organizations; it cannot be wrong in principle (it will at worst only be inexpedient) to join in a general society ready to do one or all these things as occasion admits.

But before that is possible, we must have a deeper selfconsciousness as to the capacities of our common nature. We have to feel that that common burning of the heart against Injustice, that sympathy with suffering Humanity, which our Antislavery movement displayed, was no accident, no momentary caprice, but is everlasting, deep-smouldering within, and needs but the breath of heaven or the gathering of many hearts together to wake it into a steady flame,—

the altar-blaze for the Church of the Future; which will be truly catholic, that is, commensurate with human virtue. Starting from human nature as it is, it will aid to develop it into what it may be; not accepting political enactments nor conventional practices nor theological tenets as a final test of Right, but always reaching out towards fuller Justice, and through Justice to a more abiding, universal, and active Good Will.

§ 2. Property and Communism.

Poets have always represented the primitive age of Gold as enjoying all things in common. So, whenever any strong religious or even moral impulse puts a common enthusiasm into men, and blends them into a new unselfish union, the desire rises of getting rid of private property, which, as connected with much that is mean and evil, is judged to be unworthy of men in whom high moral influences predominate. The theory of this was enunciated by Plato; the practice of it was enforced by Jesus. Not only his immediate apostles, but the earliest Jerusalem church, when its numbers were counted by thousands, honestly obeyed his precept; sold their goods and estates, and threw them into a common stock for the benefit of the whole body. Similar phenomena from time to time reappear in religious communities, and in modern days they become the more remarkable when they are found in separation from religion, as a result of a merely moral enthusiasm or fanaticism,—whichever it be esteemed. In France no new enthusiasm seems to stir, except Communism; the tendency to which is said to be also widely spread in Germany. So broad a fact suggests, that the Church of the Future will not be able to overlook and neglect the problem of Communism, which Christianity boldly undertook, and as quickly renounced.

Some consideration therefore of the topic seems here not out of place.

Such sacrifice of property as the earliest Christian Church practised, was necessarily evanescent as a fire of stubble; for the fuel was not reproduced. The church of Jerusalem was soon in profound and hopeless poverty, so that Paul and others had to make collections from Christians in all parts of the world for the relief of "the poor saints of Jerusalem." For others to imitate such an example was too much: thus the precept of Jesus was permanently overruled, and Christians were taught,—not, to sell their goods and give to the poor, but—out of their abundance to be liberal. A totally different kind of Communism is that of Religious Orders, which recognizes the Order itself as a moral unit, not only possessing private property of its own, but using that property reproductively. In very modern times America gives us the remarkable cases of the Rappists and the Mormons; of which the former have had time to work out their problem more completely. The Rappists live but to labour for the community, which has therefore become inordinately rich. Since they discourage marriage, (which seems to be ignored among them,) their numbers are steadily and of late rapidly decreasing, and their vast hoarded wealth is becoming the exclusive property of a smaller and smaller number of persons. Such is the singular termination of a society which began with high aspirations after spiritual perfection, and from contempt of wealth established common property. The evil and the folly here evidently depends on a narrow and absurd devotion to the interests of their own small community, to the neglect of other men: but the example does not the less instructively show the terminus to which cooperative societies, such as Mr. Robert Owen planned, will drive when most successful. They are not likely to forswear marriage, or dwindle from a failure of population, yet each

society would be an Interest, rivalling and competing with other societies, as certainly as now Railway Companies. Communities on such a plan may have many advantages; but there is one thing which they can never do, viz. destroy competition; for they will necessarily compete with one another. To contend for them by inveighing against competition in the abstract as an immoral principle, is a delusion and an injustice.

So long as cooperation goes on as in a commercial company, it leaves the principle of private property untouched; for each member reserves property for himself, which does not belong to the company. The opposite principle can *never* become the normal one of human nature, for this plain reason, that no man's powers are mortgaged for the benefit of the whole human race indifferently. The much abused proverb, "Charity begins at home," is a deep and incontrovertible truth. A man is far more solemnly pledged to feed his wife, his children, or his aged parents, than to care for his second cousin or his poor neighbours. Nor only so; but he is under stronger duty to secure that his wife shall have comforts and his children education, than to busy himself to save a foreign people from starving. So, if it be proposed to him to throw his fortune into a common lot with 300 people, previously unconnected with him;—granting that, in some cases, it may be an excellent speculation to do this, yet it never can be (on other grounds) a duty: for he is bound to look to the interest of those immediately depending on him rather than that of the 300 comparatively distant persons.

In a crisis of religious movement, like that of incipient Christianity, family and kinsmanship is temporarily perhaps broken up by the enmities which proselytism generates, and by the common zeal which the new faith inspires. At such a moment, community of goods among the believers is na-

tural, while ardent and generous feelings prevail; yet, even then, it is impossible to pronounce *that* to be wholesome, which inevitably acts as a bait to the indolent and to the poor. And so soon as the normal state recurs,—when marriages recommence,—when parental duties and responsibilities are incurred,—the principle of renouncing private property becomes unnatural and unreasonable. The renunciation is also conceivable in a martial community surrounded by enemies, and living as it were always in camp: for here the public danger forces the rights of Family to yield to those of Nation: but with peace and safety this condition of things will end. In fact, attachment to definite objects, moveable and immoveable, is so deeply rooted in human nature, that the attempt to tear out the principle must always, in the general, be a failure; and in the particular, must destroy much of happiness and of virtue, where it seems to succeed. Every powerful human propensity is of course liable to become excessive or unseasonable; and as the love of woman, so the love of property is at once the source of numberless excellent results and also of numerous evils. It often happens, that the evil strikes the imagination more, and seems to be predominant; but that is probably a mere illusion.

The Communistic theories of modern days,—as of Fourier and of Owen,—did not arise, as in various religious communities, from absorption in spiritual interests and from a consciousness of inward union, which proceeded to long for outward union also: but it was prompted by philanthropy, aiming at arrangements for the physical welfare of the millions. Not only are our contrasts of wealth and poverty painful, but great odium has fallen on private property; because statute law has gone such terrible lengths in the maintaining of individual rights against those of the community, especially in the matter of Land. In the beginning of the century whole counties of the Scottish Highlands

were depopulated by landlords, to make sheep-walks; and since then, to make shooting grounds, which (it seems) *pay* a landlord better than human tenants. In Ireland, the inveterate mal-arrangements of landed tenure have led to the starvation of perhaps a quarter of a million people, and the expatriation of a million more. There is surely no rashness in saying that a system is fundamentally deficient and is a hideous disgraceful wrong,—which produces such results. Nor is the case very different, in regard to the inhabitants of our own great towns. When men cannot get pure air or water, and are artificially forbidden to migrate to neighbouring vacant places where each is to be had, no sooner is independent thought awakened in them, than they feel that the law is unjust; and the more cogently one proves to them the necessity of forbidding them to "squat" on the public commons or on the parks of the rich, the more convinced are they apt to become that the whole system of society, and all the laws of property, need to be torn up and reorganized. Modern Communism is the shriek of outraged humanity, protesting against the doctrine that man was made for landed property, and not the land for man.

Again, in England the haughtiness which separates class from class, (of which the demeanour towards Domestic Servants is the most marked and significant fact,) gives an impulse to Communism, wherever any freedom of thought is gained. Hence in the manufacturing towns more than elsewhere this has developed itself.

The exasperation of Communism has been also increased by indignation against the doctrine of Mr. Malthus concerning population and poor-rates; a doctrine which cannot be shortly stated, or shortly characterized, without encountering the charge of unfairness. Without intending to question either his benevolence or his intelligence, one may remark, that the legislature, in adopting that "New" Poor

Law which has been regarded as so flagrantly Malthusian, distinctly rejected his doctrine of totally refusing support to able-bodied paupers. In fact, the experience of Ireland clearly showed that Malthus wholly mistook the results of driving a population to despair. We may add; recent events demonstrate that he greatly underrated the power of emigration and of free trade in provisions; and if we may leave our descendants two or three centuries hence to struggle as they best may with their own problem, we must for ourselves pronounce, that the Earth is *not* niggard to us, but abounds with sufficiency. That so large a part of mankind, and of our own nation, suffers at present from want and disease and violence, we ascribe not at all with Malthus to the barrenness of the soil, but with the Communists and the Perfectionists to *moral* evils, which, if not immediately conquerable, ought nevertheless to be immediately grappled with.

The extreme *indefiniteness* of Communistic desires and claims makes them dangerous in the eye of a Statesman, absurd and unreasonable to a Political Economist. Surely not without right. The vague expectations of advantage which the Paris Communists conceived in the opening of the French republic, were an augury of vast disappointment and sanguinary despair. To an Economist there is nothing to refute in Communism; because it commits itself to no clear and tangible assertion. But while this airy emptiness of it is an excellent reason against professing in any way to accede to its ranks, it ought to be observed that its intellectual vagueness results from its being a deep emotion; and its dangerous explosiveness is also a promise of its becoming a spiritual force, if rightly guided. The rallying of its English votaries to a few gentlemen who have entitled themselves *Christian* Socialists, seems to attest that great numbers, in whom Socialism is an aspiration dimly under-

stood, will lay aside fanaticism and pedantic adherence to any definite forms, whenever abler minds guide them into a substantial realization of their fundamental desire. Indeed neither Religion nor Philosophy can effect its aim of uniting mankind in goodness and affection, if it evades (as hitherto) those questions concerning Property, on which the physical welfare of our millions depends, and especially concerning Property in Land.

This is not the place to discuss such a topic any farther: it will suffice to point out in what direction to look for a remedy which may satisfy all the higher desires of communists. I will venture to express the remedy in the form of a Rule: viz. "To make all things common, which in their "own nature *can* be common, but to keep all other things "in their own rank of more or less exclusiveness." The meaning of this may need to be expanded.

Food and Clothing are in their own nature exclusive possessions. The same piece of bread cannot feed, nor the same coat cover, two different persons. Such things may remain for a time in common stock, but the moment they are applied to enjoyment, they are appropriated. All that can be desired concerning this class of objects, is, that there may be enough for the needs of all, and that each may have the means of securing his share. All our lower wants, pressing as they are, yet happily are finite; satiety rapidly comes on. Even the extravagance of gluttony has no other effect, than that more food is ordinarily produced than is strictly needed; so as to afford a margin for reduction in years of famine. It is not really a great and difficult problem for a civilized nation to feed and clothe all its members fully. Even savages can ordinarily do this adequately for their sense of want; and the power of productive industry increases tenfold with civilization. When such a people as the English cannot get the same abundance as a Mohawk or a Carib, it

must be either through personal *immoralities and neglect*, or through *injustice* in the public institutions. Even when we discern the existence of the former cause, yet if it is widespread and uniform, we may justly regard this itself to be an effect of the latter.

The other class of objects is that which leads to all the struggle and difficulty,—namely, things which are not necessary to animal life, but the desire of which is infinite and insatiable. On the possession of some share of these depends all the superiority and glory of man: hence it is reasonable in the poorer to desire them, and it is inexcusable selfishness in the richer not to recognize that reasonableness, and aid toward the attainment. We may sum all of these up in the word *Mental Gratifications*, a result of which is (when wisely used) mental cultivation and moral improvement. To speak generally, the things which minister to the mind are in their nature made to be Common. The same morsel of meat cannot feed two mouths, but the same beautiful prospect will feed ten thousand pair of eyes, and lose nothing. Light and Knowledge, Beauty of nature and of art, Poetry and to a great extent Melody of sound, are naturally communistic. The intensity of family life in England, and the sacredness of our privacy, have issued in a more exclusive and selfish system of enjoyment than is common on the European continent. Yet even here our noblemen, when absent from home, open their galleries of pictures or sculpture and the beautiful views in their parks to the well dressed part of the nation. And we are moving on. Not only is there a growing sense how far we are left behind other nations in this sort of liberality, but the increased desire for Public Parks, Libraries, Museums, is the commencement of a new era. It is to be hoped that future time will treat it as a disgraceful selfishness to appropriate to one's own sole indulgence any unique object of curiosity

or of high art, which, as a public possession, might have ministered instruction or enjoyment to thousands.

But the educated classes owe another debt to the less educated, viz. to impart some portion of their own intercourse, at least when they are in bodily presence together. Sir Walter Scott is said to have made it a rule *always to talk* with everybody with whom he was long together, and therefore peculiarly to his coachman. Our English habit too generally is to avoid all such talk with inferiors, as might interest, instruct and develop their minds and hearts: hence in great measure that boorishness of the rustics, that "snobbishness" of townsmen, of which refined persons so unreasonably complain. Our time may be too valuable to give to the society of our inferiors; (at least let this be presumed;) but when we *are* with them, it is misanthropic and truly selfish to shut up in our own breasts whatever of knowledge or kindness we have;—and really kind people are guilty of this. All who live in educated circles may impart something of grace and general culture highly delightful to others. The mind in all its forms is an inexhaustible treasure, which goes largely to waste through the unnatural chasm now existing between those who have it almost in superfluity and those in whom it is deficient.

The materials for mental gratification are infinite, and are (for the most part) unimpaired by use: the desire also is infinite: and human nature would be contented with a scanty sufficiency for animal life, if to this were added a lavish supply to mental wants. But there is one condition less easy, it may seem, to fulfil, viz. to attain for a whole nation adequate Leisure. If unjust institutions subject men to inordinate hours of labour, some debasement of mind and immorality may be anticipated; namely, if there is neither time nor energy left for mental culture: in this case, even when misery is produced by the improvidence

and vice of individuals, we must generally blame the institutions, which left them to be, or even made them to be, improvident and vicious. Nevertheless, admitting that Englishmen work twice as many hours in the year as a savage, the difficulty with them as to obtaining leisure for mental cultivation is to a great extent factitious. To the majority, one seventh part of time is actually set apart from the routine of work, and nothing but evil superstition forbids the use of this for liberal culture of every kind. If children were never allowed to have less than three or four hours' schooling every weekday, and the Sundays were judiciously used by adults, the existing hard labour of the English people would not hinder its attaining a considerable expansion of mind.

Besides, we know from other nations that there is one kind of cultivation which needs no special times allotted to it, and which may be shared in by the poorest. The lowest Turk has personal dignity, the poorest Brahmin has grace: in each case it appears to be primitively founded in religion. The Turk is profoundly persuaded of the equality, before God, of the meanest believer with the loftiest: the Brahmin is as assured of the superiority which his caste gives him. But long ages of hereditary training have been superadded to the primitive conception: hence good manners are universal.—Now it is here enough to say, that to cultivate more of grace, cleanliness and dignity in men of our lowest classes cannot be denied to be of *moral* importance, when those who have studied the causes of that female ruin which is so appalling and heartrending a phenomenon in the nations among whom it might least have been expected, attribute a very sensible fraction of it to the attraction felt by poor girls towards men of manners more refined than they meet in the men of their own rank.

Between the two extremes of bodily necessaries and men-

tal gratifications, lie numerous other things which are generally much coveted,—the whole apparatus of ease, pomp, power of movement, and facilities of leisure. But the desires which give currency to Communism are (if I mistake not) rather to be called republican than mercenary. It is not envy for the equipages and luxury of the rich which we here meet, so much as a consciousness of human equality and the wish to be treated as "a man and a brother." The broad chasm which separates the plebeian from the "gentleman," and forbids their social intercourse on equal terms, is that which frets and chafes the Communist; and the more so, when he sees that because of mere wealth a vulgar and coarse man is admissible into aristocratic circles. In Paris perhaps the term Communism may rally to itself those who hate industry, and would fain live at other men's expense, without being counted thieves. But at least in England it is my persuasion that the active principle which excites communistic yearnings, is substantially an honourable one,—a sense of the unity and brotherhood of man, a desire to be recognized as a brother, and not as a mere tool of industry. And this surely is a nobler impulse than our money-getting classes ordinarily display.

The extravagant selfishnesses of Luxury also have exasperated Communism; but the cure is not to be sought in sumptuary laws nor in any direct prohibition; for luxury is too various and too subtle to be dealt with by a lawyer. It is to be feared, that where policy fosters and almost commands extravagant pomp and luxury in princes, no national opinion can adequately bridle the evil in wealthy private persons. But the direction in which we have to strive, seems clear; viz. to recognize the propriety of grandeur, beauty and solid dignity in everything public,—whether a townhall or a marketplace or a museum or a church or a senatehouse or a palace; then *such* pomp in a prince, as is

a mere incident of his office and implies no personal weakness, would have nothing of bad example, and it might not be impossible to frown down pampered habits in the rich. But at present, the newly rich, who desire to rise into noble circles, find that the way is, to launch out into elegant splendour. We greatly need a religion which shall, without sourness or narrowness of mind, teach the higher uses of wealth.

Property itself is morally of two different sorts,—first, things desired because of their high exchangeable value,—secondly, things desired for their own sake. The former sort may be vaguely called Money, since their value is measured by the money which they will fetch. Money is in fact a form of Power, which, as an instrument, deserves to be highly esteemed. The love of it is censurable only when we refuse to sacrifice the meaner to the higher object, and love it more than what is better. Manifestly it is more ignoble, to esteem a picture for its commercial worth, than for its intrinsic beauty or its tender associations: yet each kind of esteem is in itself legitimate. But while we generally have to speak of the love of money as something *conceded* and *lawful*, (for in few men is it liable to be in defect,) we may use such words as *honourable*, *beneficial*, *virtuous*, of attachment to objects which we love for their own sake, and therefore desire to have as our own. The clinging of the affections to old, habitual sights, is the foundation of a large part of domestic and patriotic virtue, and reconciles men and women to service which otherwise would be a slavery.

It is only by metaphor that we can speak of persons as Property; but with these also there is the distinction of *more* or *less* exclusiveness in possession. A wife is necessarily the property of one man only. Brothers and sisters extend but to a few. We cannot expand the limits of a

Family far, without destroying the essence of family-feeling. But beyond this, there are more distant kinsmen, and friends, and neighbours, and fellowcountrymen, and finally mankind. I am aware, there *are* Socialists, who imagine that these distinctions are to be obliterated, and who indeed look forward to the relaxation of the marriage-tie as a peculiarly notable improvement in the morality of the future. Happily, we do not yet need to argue against the notion; it suffices to pronounce it a retrogression into barbarism. But in making this remark, I by no means mean to imply, that the law of divorce, as it exists in England, is either just or expedient. That question is to be argued on its own basis, especially with a view to the protection of women from violence.

Nor in the above has any thing been said to prejudge the possibility of *voluntary* partnerships on a large scale. If a common enthusiasm exists, powerful enough to subdue the repulsion of egotism, the Mormonites offer abundant proof what external successes of industry may be achieved. But to *enforce* such a partnership would be to inflict slavery as well as plunder: the real problem therefore for the Communist is, how to infuse this common enthusiasm. It cannot be generated by appealing to men's sense of INTEREST, which does but intensify egotism. It is in vain to prove, (if it can be proved,) that such communities are economically most productive. We need all to imbibe a strong sense of duty, a selfabandoning spirit and a high philanthropy, *before* mankind can voluntarily become communists and produce the result hoped for. But when those virtues have become universal, there will be *many* forms of industrial organization under which men can be generally prosperous. Selfsupporting communities may be one of those. Thus the moral problem is the real one,—how we may become more virtuous and less selfish: and this does *not* mean,

that we are to regard all human beings as equally entitled to our service and aid.

§ 3. On Organized Institutions.

If there were in us no innate love of society, we might perhaps be forced to congregate and cooperate by our individual weakness. But the inducement thus held out by interest is far less influential than our inward impulse. Man is not merely gregarious, like sheep or horses; he is essentially social and political. Indeed, upon this his moral life has depended: for morality is developed out of social union.

Nor in fact would a mere sense of interest have sufficed to bring about cooperation so effective as that which actually we see on all sides. For its fullest energy it is necessary that men's Affections be attached, their Conscience awakened, and their Imagination kindled by an ideal. To develop our moral nature wisely in these directions, is the noble problem undertaken by Religion, but everywhere hitherto most imperfectly solved.

The forming of an ideal to the Imagination is probably here the fundamental matter; for on this the Affections fasten themselves, and thence are transferred to all parts of the community: moreover, out of reverence for this ideal grows the sense of Duty, and especially, the duty of Self-sacrifice.

To have an ideal for which we live and die, is a first prerequisite for a life which deserves to be called human. If we had none, we should be mere creatures of desire, carried away by it, as inanimate bodies by attraction or beasts by their momentary inclinations: the powers of the Will would be unexercised, and there would be no moral persistency. According as the ideal is worthy or unworthy, the life is

beneficial or pernicious; but in either case it is human, and it is unselfish. Our highest ideal is (whether we know it or not) a God to us; and if we devote ourselves to it, we are practical Theists, whatever our creed. He who worships no ideal at all, but lives for self, is the real atheist*.

So too every ideal which we admire, love, reverence, though it be not our only one nor our highest, is a partial divinity to us, and develops in us a part of religion. Such is the case of many Institutions, especially the two known as one's Country and one's Church. In strictness indeed, every institution is only a sort of machinery, useful for producing an end beyond itself, and valued for this reason. This is never forgotten in those institutions, which are intended to be dissolved as soon as a defined end is gained,—as, a political association for carrying a certain enactment. But where the ends proposed are indefinite, and the duration of the organism unlimited, the Affections often fasten upon it as on a thing to be loved for its own sake, as on one's Club, one's Regiment, or one's University, even if we are thoroughly sensible that it is a mere tool. This is really a very important distinction of organisms into two classes, viz. into *those valued solely as means to an end*, and *those which are loved also for their own sakes*. The latter alone afford an ideal to the imagination, alone have a life and a history, and in certain cases can command even devout selfsacrifice from their members: and on this depends their vital force. Assuredly superstition and fanaticism are often blended here with single-hearted selfdevotion, namely, when men forget that the institution is admirable only as subservient to some great good, and continue to worship it even when it on the whole thwarts and overthrows good. Nevertheless, where the ends of an institution are numerous and vast, where it seems to

* See James Martineau's noble discourse, "Where is thy God?" vol. ii. sermon 1.

be made not by the will of man but by the counsel of God, where we distrust our own power of judging concerning its utilities; it seems to be not unreasonable to have Faith in the institution itself, and to devote ourselves to it as our end, believing that God uses it as his instrument for his own higher ends. Such Faith *in herself* the Roman Church freely demands; nor would this be unreasonable, if in other respects her claims could be made good. Such Faith men habitually exercise in the cause of their Nationality, devoting themselves to death for its sake, as for a final object of desire. Nor is that all; but the same wonderful phenomenon shows itself (under the name of Discipline) even with mercenary soldiers, hired supporters of a power with which they have nothing in common. Habit nevertheless, and the sympathy of comrades, and the tradition of past exploits, leads them to fall in love with the ideal of their army or regiment,—be it Mameluke or Prætorian. A mere *number* perhaps, as "the Forty Second," kindles the soldier's enthusiasm, and he offers himself a willing victim for the honour of that magical name.

The absolute goodness of an ideal eminently conduces to call out devotion, inasmuch as human nature is susceptible to goodness. Nevertheless, a certain blindness in the votaries seems to be as effective in winning their whole heart, as any possible loveliness in the object. Every religion has its martyrs, (it has often been said,) Hindoos as well as Christians; Servetus was burnt for anti-trinitarianism, Giordano Bruno for imputed atheism. As two eminent instances of institutions, which, though variously faulty or pernicious, inspired intense selfsacrifice in their votaries, we may point to the Roman Republic of ancient days, and the Order of the Jesuits. To the old Romans it was no poetical metaphor, but a real fact, that Rome was their goddess. To her honour and aggrandizement they blindly devoted themselves, tram-

pling down all men's rights, as well as sacrificing their own, for this object: and in consequence, the successes of Rome form a vast and dreadful fact in ancient history. Much the same may be said concerning the Jesuits. They professed their Society to be merely an organ subsidiary to the Church and especially to the Papal power; yet this organ was with them an end in itself, an idol of worship, to which they surrendered their conscience and their honour, swearing to do whatever their Grand Master bade them, and live or die for their Order. In consequence the Order became so powerful, as first to save the falling Papacy, and next to frighten it. So great was the power, and therefore so insatiable the ambition, of the Jesuits, and so unbounded, so unscrupulous, the selfabandonment of their members to the Order, that the Popes and all the Catholic sovereigns at length proscribed it. Such is the force of an ideal, which gathers into one focus the energies of many minds.

Energy moreover is added by success. Power, it is often said, tends to its own increase; and evidently it aids to fascinate men's minds, as indeed it is one signal attribute of God, and therefore of the great agencies established by God. Power also is that quality, which all minds well understand; and power to constrain other men is a possession which even very vigorous minds, when deficient in justice, are apt to covet. Hence an institution which starts successfully, attracts to itself the many who bow down to power, and the few who burn to attain it. A singular problem now awaits solution,—whether Mormonism, after successes so unexpected, is to go on conquering, or whether it is speedily to be broken up by internal quarrels and by its inherent monstrosity of doctrine. But to look back, we see strikingly how Mohammedism, which at first was very feeble, became suddenly strong after a few moderate, but startling successes. Men certainly love to be on the winning side, and flock to it

as to the cause of God, not from mere selfishness, but from enthusiasm and halfenlightenment. On the contrary, every Mohammedan community loses its power of proselyting, from the day that its spell of divine success is broken.

Looking from without at the unreasonable and unjust impulses which actuate a whole community as with a single life, we call them fanatical. But inasmuch as they often constitute human power of the first order, they cannot be despised; and they often can no more be fought against directly, than the "ruffian waves" of the sea: nothing, then, is left for wisdom, but to seek an escape. But when the ebb of fanaticism has steadily set in, when its selfconfidence is broken and it comforts itself by the remembrance of past victories, not by consciousness of present might, we know that it can no more resume its primitive energies, than an old man become young again. New organisms may indeed spring out of the old trunk, as Jesuitism was grafted on Catholicism; but no permanent life is hereby reinfused into a decayed system: which at most, does but support its exterior greatness against attack.

It is, however, a great calamity, when those who have right, and even mass, on their side, yet cannot combine against a smaller power which possesses unity; barely because the latter has a pervading fanaticism, and the former have no one predominating and concentrating impulse. I conceive that this, which in political history has endless illustrations, is emphatically true in modern England as applied to religious sects. Every sect is powerful, not in proportion to its numbers, but in proportion to the intensity of its action, and its determinate sacrifice of everything else to the dominant ideas of the sect. Men in office dread the energetic hatred of any small organized body, the extent of whose influence can never be well calculated. Hence an English ministry, and even an English Parliament, often

quails before the demand of a religious faction which they inwardly despise; since, by opposing it, they know they will incur fanatical enmity, and see not distinctly from whom they will earn active gratitude. Such a state of things makes it highly *desirable*, even on the ground of selfdefence, for the upholders of religious freedom,—if possible,—to organize themselves against the encroachments and insolence of the sects. But the mere desirableness of the thing is not likely to effect it; for interest, though an ever-acting influence, does not easily unite bodies of men, unless it be attached to material objects as common property. To make a voluntary organic union possible and durable, there must be principles *loved* in common, and loved so dearly, as to overcome the repulsion existing between natures and classes of men otherwise different.

The principle here mainly concerned is Union in Freedom; which, whatever may be pretended against it, is no mere negation, much less a selfish claim. Those who say that it is, tell sad tales against themselves, as showing their own lack of that great basis of virtue, justice. A wild beast undoubtedly loves its own liberty by a primitive instinct; and this same instinct we have and need; but it is not virtue. It does not imply any concern for other people's liberty, or any unwillingness to enslave them. But it is the peculiarity of man to limit love of his own liberty to that which is just, to discern that it is just, to desire the same just thing for others, and to love and rejoice in liberty, whenever and wherever it is established, *because* it is just: and this is not only a virtue, but is the most royal virtue of social life; not indeed as making a man's society most delightful, but as making his rule most beneficial. Hence this is precisely the virtue, which, of all others, is best adapted to make any social organism work smoothly, and save all loss of power by inward discord. Nor only so; but

this is the virtue, which, above all others, has given energy to Protestant sects: the very name, "Religious Liberty," has been their rallying cry, even when they imperfectly understood how far the principle ought to carry them. Looking at their inconsistencies, we, perhaps, may be apt to feel some contempt for their apparent hypocrisy; but, it is probable, their error was a selfdeception, and, with a majority perhaps, only a shortsightedness. From want of imagination, they could not realize to themselves cases beyond their personal experience; and they believed themselves to be fighting *entirely* (as they were, *partially*,) the battle of freedom; and to this conviction their energy was in great measure due. Among our old Puritans, and still more among the Independents who followed them, not only many individuals, but emphatically the leading men, most sincerely loved religious liberty as a principle. Hence the leaders went so far ahead of their followers in the next generation, as to lose organic connection with them. This, which has left the Independents to weakness for more than a century, at the same time reveals to us what had been their strength; viz., *not* their Bibliolatry, (for that they still retain,) but their zeal for common mental freedom, which now has passed from them to others. This circumstance ought, I think, to convince those others, that though they may have little dogmatic theology in common, yet the moral enthusiasm inspired by love of liberty—which is justice under another name—is quite an adequate cement of union, if the love be indeed sincere and intelligent. No! we must add, —if it be *dominant*. Sincere and intelligent approval may coexist with very feeble desire. Men may love justice much, but personal quietness more, and this they may call peacefulness. Such will not be energetic allies; yet they will not be enemies: at worst they will be lukewarm friends, and may possibly help with the purse, where they shrink from

other support. However; where men's heart is pervaded by a dominant love of justice,—where the intellect clearly sees all that justice implies and requires of human brotherhood,—this love undoubtedly supplies an adequate bond; perhaps it is in fact the essence of all that was pure and healthy in the ecclesiastical zeal of Scotch Cameronians and English Independents. It is therefore, in my belief, an impulse energetic enough to infuse life, in the latter half of this nineteenth century, into a new organization for extending human rights through moral union, if indeed it exists and is dominant so widely as I think.

The desire of justice is no doubt often counterfeited by selfish impulse; so also is Love, namely, where men desire to receive—but not to give—admiration, affection, and honour. But many phenomena of our age indicate that the general heart now longs for Sympathy, not from selfish, but from rightly human desire. Thousands are learning, that to *receive* sympathy which shall be more than a lofty pity, they must *deserve* it; and that it is deserved by personal morality in its widest sense, which is at once the cement of human society and the best state of the individual. If then the desire of Manifested Brotherhood, as a proper result of true inward growth, is widely spread, no sooner will it take shape, than we may trust to see, *first*, a mutual respectful confidence, *secondly*, a belief in the fruitfulness of the principle which unites the members. Then an effort to cooperate will naturally follow, and out of cooperation will rise (if the morality of the individuals is ripe for it) an esteem for the Society as an ideal.

The power of *emblems* to give some image to the eye, and aid the mind in recalling the Ideal of its society, is well known. Every nation loves its own Flag; the Church of Rome teaches her convert's eyes to be familiar with her images and her draperies, even before their minds have

learned her doctrines: our oldest and most durable brotherhoods are the Free Masons and the Odd Fellows, both of which anxiously accustom their members to the paraphernalia of the society. Nevertheless, the experience of Protestantism, as in part also of Mohammedism, proves that emblems are not essential, even for fanatical cooperation. These communions have been not unjustly reproached with making idols of *propositions*. The Mohammedan creed, "God is one God, and Mohammed is his prophet," is made a charm, and a sacrament which covers many sins: so too was the solemn league and covenant of the Presbyterian North. I do not deny (but enforce upon occasion) that zeal for propositions, like zeal for emblems, may exist without intelligence or pure desire: yet we may deduce from the fact, that a society which has a very short and clear verbal creed to rally to, stands in no need of an ocular flag such as pageantry gives.

But in truth, such aids are intended to make up for want of intelligence, where mere numbers are needed as a defensive mass, or coveted as a source of power. Here, however, we must covet quality, more than numbers. Unless the earlier members of a voluntary society be decidedly superior in moral earnestness and purity to that which is allowed to rule in the average of existing churches,—it cannot add to the moral elevation of its age. If men do not exist, who are actuated by a higher morality—I do not say, than the old churches *avow*, but than that for which they *cooperate* and *act organically*, no more fruitful union is yet possible: but if they exist, (as every philanthropic movement exterior to the churches proves,) their union will not need external emblems, and need not fall into the snare of idolizing the dead letter of propositions.

Lastly, it must be steadily kept in mind, that as no association can be durable, which is not loved for its own sake,

independently of its immediately visible or calculable fruits; nor fruitful, which aims only at narrowly defined and previously recognized objects; so no association can attain the rank of a Church, unless men flock into it *from the impulse of desire,*—from what one may call a moral instinct,—apart from nice calculations of utility. If our hearts burn for some nobler development of charity and moral unity, than existing churches afford;—if we feel that theological churches necessarily split into a hundred pieces our common brotherhood and common nationality;—if we fret and burst, not, to raise our own heads loftier, or to eat and dress more daintily, but to learn and to teach the highest truths, to trust and be trusted by thousands, to impart and receive all the *common* goods of human life, to cultivate all excellence, and, in the midst of diversities of trade, station, and character, to realize the unity of MAN, and avow that we will no longer be kept apart in schism, isolation, or hostility by any conventionalisms of fashion or of religious dogma;—actuated by such impulses, we may possibly be ripe to form a Church.

But this leads to speak of the Church, as distinguished from the State.

§ 4. ON STATE AND CHURCH.

The State is founded on a military, the Church on a religious organization. Let us grant that in the more perfect and advanced stage of human nature these two must become blended into a single system by their mutual relations: it will not the less remain true, that in the less perfect stage the two are sharply distinguishable, and, indeed, need to be kept independent for the sake of both. It avails not to argue with Hooker, that *because* (or if) the same individuals are included in the two organizations, *therefore* the two are one. This is a palpable fallacy. What is commoner,

than that the same persons belong to several societies, and hold different rank in them? The same man may be a Proprietor of the East India Company, Manager of a Railroad, Colonel in the Militia, and Member of the British Association. It would be absurd to say that the societies are but one, and the man must be manager in the scientific society, because this was his post in a commercial body. Nor would it be less absurd, though accidentally every one of these societies were composed of the very same persons. The man who takes the lead in one, fitly marches in the rear of another. This is recognized and acted on so perpetually by men's good sense, that nothing but adulation and pride can lead to its being forgotten in the affairs of Church and State. Indeed, whatever may be advanced by speculating divines concerning the propriety of the civil power,—king, parliament or whatever else,—assuming to be Head in religion, the civil power itself is now-a-days too modest and well-behaved to do so. It is useless to urge that ministers of State and high Councillors ought to be religious men, and well taught in religion. True: but not *better* taught than other men. They were not appointed to their post for the sake of their religious character; there is no presumption of their fitness to assume the place of religious guides: hence, to do so, is not less absurd than to lay down the law in matters of science.

If men could be as calm and as just in regard to religion, as in regard to science, the State might give external aids to religion, as it does to astronomy, without enacting the doctrines to be taught; but might distribute its patronage by purely moral tests. But even if this were attained, the idea of the Church would remain separate from that of the State, just as now the idea of a University, or of a Physicians' College: and in proportion as the State is religiously defective, its contrast to the Church is naturally more marked.

When the ruling power is appropriated by an individual or a family, it is of course now and then possible, but seldom probable, that the ruler will excel in high mental qualities; seldomest of all, in religion. Even when the rule is strictly free, as that of the Nation ruling over itself, the ruling body scarcely reaches to the average of the people in moral goodness. For instance, in the United States, it would not appear that the members of Congress and of the Ministry have so high a tone of morals or so pure a religion as the majority of the nation: at any rate they are decidedly believed to fall below the best and wisest. And this necessarily results from the finite nature of man. When we need a gardener, we can get a gardener; and if we want a scholar, him also we can get: but if we seek for a gardener who shall be also a scholar, this is no longer easy. So when we want a legislator,—who must be a man of business, acquainted with English law and European history, and generally with the political side of the world, and at the same time be an effective speaker and an honest man; add to all this, that he must be a man willing and able to serve the public in this capacity,—and it is surely difficult to get so many qualities in combination. Now these qualities are at least as appropriate to the office of a parliamentary man, as knowledge of plants to a gardener: and as it would be absurd to take as gardener a religious man who was lame and ignorant of plants, rather than a barely honest man who was skilful in this art, so in choosing civil rulers, (whether legislators, ministers or judges,) *specific ability* is necessarily looked to preeminently: if to this is joined so much only of moral goodness as will secure faithful service, we are forced to be satisfied, and indeed to think ourselves fortunate.

Thus the Platonic idea of a State in which "philosophers" shall rule, is very far from being either attained or likely to be soon attainable. The presumption is, that mi-

nisters of State and legislators *collectively* will by no means represent the highest moral and religious development of the nation, for the very reason that they *do* (in a well regulated community) represent its highest business-talent. Yet it is their collective action which guides public affairs. Hence, whatever the personal goodness of individual statesmen, the political affairs of every free and enlightened nation will, on the whole, be conducted by a morality decidedly lower than the best of the day. Are, then, these loftier and purely moral energies, which can only have individual representation, but seldom or never a majority, in Parliaments and Cabinets, to have no organs in which they shall be predominant and ruling? Our theoretic reply is, *Yes! in the Church.* The ideal of a Church, is, that organization of men (whether whole or part of a nation) in which goodness and wisdom shall be the great qualification for rule and office. These are qualities in which no man has a right to assume his own preeminence: hence he cannot do as the "kings of the Gentiles," *i. e.*, inherit or seize power and honour, but he earns (more or less) influence by the force of his manifested superiority. The nature of such a society is essentially voluntary, as that of a scientific union. As long as it is faithful to its objects, and the civil government is not separated from the church by too vast a moral chasm for alternate influence, no hostility between the two is to be feared; as indeed we see in our own Protestant sects. The Church, in a healthy condition, is a most valuable supplement to the State, by attending to moral interests, and pointing to injustices and moral evils, which the State collectively is too dimsighted or too busy to care for; it is serviceable also by reinforcing those public men who rise above the moral average of their colleagues. Every one who is familiar with the great advances which science owes to Universities and permanent Associations, will admit that if Philan-

thropy were cultivated by a church as devotedly as Science has been by many scientific institutions, the benefits would be vast.

Experience indeed teaches all statesmen to dread the ambition of a Church, which, if its organization is commensurate with that of the State, is able to thwart the public authorities very disagreeably. This undoubtedly is an insuperable difficulty, where the State aims to be despotic, and forbids public discussion: for it will inevitably happen that the same measures which have a political, have also a purely moral aspect. Much more is the collision of the two inevitable, if the Church also aims at a separate despotism. But when free discussion and lawful freedom is the principle of both organisms, then their joint action is either peaceful, or at least limited to a constitutional antagonism. In our own country, when the Government of the day proposes an enactment,—for instance, the recent India Bill; no grave offence is felt at an Association organizing itself for the express object of carrying measures wholly opposed to those of the existing Government. If the Society of Wesleyan Methodists had taken up this topic, no one would any the more have thought the State in danger. Indeed, we allow of political associations which may be called *factions;* which exist permanently in order to aid or oppose one side of party-warfare. Thus, however it may be urged, (not untruly as to other times and countries,) that a really successful Church would terrify the State into persecuting it, and must itself choose between selfannihilation or absorbing the State,—no one will think that any practical danger or inconvenience could threaten modern England from this side.

If indeed a very large voluntary church, (say, like that of the Wesleyans in England and in Canada,—or of the Romanists in Ireland,) uphold an internal despotism, to which the consciences of the members are spell-bound, it is liable rapidly

to become an engine of faction highly inconvenient to the State: for its leaders are little kings, whose word is law. But such an institution in no respect fulfils the ideal of a church. It does *not* gather into itself the best moral energies of the community; it does *not* confer leadership on the best and wisest men:—in fact, it cannot, if it has become an oligarchy of routine. As the vulture finds his prey, so do ambitious men scent out the places of power; in which they may rule, not by persuasion and by wisdom, but by their own will. If such places are allowed to exist in any great organism, ambitious men will creep into them. The State cannot always, without violating public liberty, directly hinder such degenerate churches; but indirectly, and in the long run, it may always undermine their despotism by fostering liberty. On another side the State has a right to interfere, against the possession of landed property by religious bodies, or bequests of property to be held in permanent trust for the promotion of specific opinions. Such influences as money and superstition may often be justly dreaded by the State; but free, open discussion, gathering of opinion and concerting common action, will not be feared, in the Church, by a State which tranquilly endures it in clubs and political associations.

Free discussion is precisely that which would break in pieces a factious, unreasonable, ambitious church. At this moment the establishment called the Anglican Church is undoubtedly a powerful political engine, in many ways annoying to our statesmen. For instance, they cannot enact an efficient system of national education, similar to that of Massachusetts or New York, chiefly because of the inordinate pretensions of its clergy. If a liberal ministry were resolved to break the power of this institution, probably the end would be effected by giving every facility to free discussion of its tenets and claims in the Convocation and else-

where. Its tendency to obstruct and clog depends upon its system of routine and its pre-enacted creed; which at once make it unable to guide the State into purer truth and larger justice, and also doom it to sink below our statesmen in these very points, and thereby to thwart them vexatiously. No such evils would follow from a truly free church; which would not be able to act in concert, except by the result of deliberations which convinced thousands of minds differing in quality and character, and agreeing only in a free pursuit of the true and right.

European churches have hitherto been of two classes. The one sort is *hereditary:* men were born into their church, and baptized because born into it. *Obedience,* not conviction, is demanded of them. Such churches, while the State was barbarous, inherited a higher morality than that of the age; and conscious of their higher vocation, they often elevated the best men of the day to ecclesiastical power. But after the State became learned and polished, the Church lost all superiority, and fell into ambitious hypocrisy; indeed, her claim of Obedience ensured this result. The other sort of church is voluntary, and consists of adults who join it from *conviction,* or adhere to it feebly from custom. Such churches are founded upon a creed, which all the members profess intelligently to believe. But hitherto, the creed has never been purely moral or spiritual, and therefore never has been such as all good and wise men could accept. It has enacted, as "religious" truth, propositions of history or of physiology or of metaphysics; or propositions which may be fitly called immoral. Thus; that Moses and Jesus worked miracles, is a statement of history, to be judged of and proved (if true) by a very peculiar kind of science. That Jesus was born of a Virgin, is (if true) a physiological fact, into the proof of which it is scarcely decorous to inquire: indeed it is hard to conceive what kind of proof

is possible, though it is a cardinal and prominent article of the creed. That three Persons are one God, is a doctrine which plunges us into the depths of metaphysical speculation, while it is as remote from all moral thought as the properties of the Equilateral Triangle which typifies and (it seems) illustrates it. As to immoral propositions, the doctrine of Atonement is decidedly viewed in this painful light by thousands of good men: but the doctrine of Human Helplessness and Depravity, as taught by all the "orthodox" churches of England, is immoral in a wider sense, viz. as proclaiming the discovery and verification of moral truth to be impossible to man. Creeds which either extravagate into unmoral fields, or lay down for belief what is rejected by good and thoughtful men, essentially impede or destroy moral union; and the good done by the churches in detail is most seriously impaired or counterbalanced by this mischief. Such churches, as indeed that of Rome before them, are pernicious in proportion to the intelligence of the age. While they did but reflect its ignorance, blended with their own faith, they were agents of good, with little evil; but when the age has cast off ignorances which they pertinaciously stereotype and enforce as divine truth, they become so hurtful, that one who sees their error, cannot easily be justified in adhering to them externally for reasons of convenience. They are at present the worst impediment to the development of pure and worldwide charity.

A true church, founded upon the principles of human brotherhood, is of course the same in principle under all political institutions. Hence it not only aids to the internal perfection of each nation, but it becomes a cement between different nations, and counteracts exclusive and unjust patriotism. Government holds with Government political correspondence, which in some sense unites the civilized world

into a single republic. But this correspondence has in it the very minimum of moral sympathy or moral aversion, and at any rate does not touch the nations. On the other hand, such churches as hold common principles are of course as a free-masonry; nor could there be any more hopeful event for all the world at this crisis, than the simultaneous formation of Humanist churches in England, Italy, Germany*, America, and ere long in Spain and France, Arabia and Turkey, perhaps India and China. Wars will still be in the East, from the ambition of despots: wars of nations against their oppressors are to the whole continent a calamitous but transitory necessity: but wars of nationalities against one another are fast coming to an end. The idea of the *mutual duties and responsibilities*, or in one word the "Solidarity" of nations, is becoming on the continent the prevalent sentiment, the characteristic of our age. In England, an excessive development of commercial spirit is unawares seeking to degrade the nobler aspiration after moral unity into a calculation of interest. But selfishness is never so fruitful as love; it is therefore shortsighted, even from its own point of view. Without disowning or undervaluing commercial relations and utilities, a Humanist church will cultivate the principle of universal brotherhood, and by the very purity of its aim will gather up into itself the enthusiastic philanthropy of the nations morally most advanced, strengthening itself by attachments on all sides, until it visibly becomes the great organ of our age, to realize that goodwill among men, for which the heart of nations aches.

* *Thing* and *name* have already arisen in Germany and spread to America; and a small community of the same origin is establishing itself in London.

§ 5. Retrospect of the Catholic Church.

It may aid to confirm and give definiteness to all that has been maintained in the preceding section, if we cast an eye back on the History of the Christian Church, and consider wherein lay her peculiarity and her strength.

All the great novelties of Christianity flowed out of the fundamental idea that it was a religion for *all* Nations, and to be propagated by mere preaching. Previously, each nationality had its own religion,—Egyptian, Assyrian, Jewish, Greek, Carthaginian, Roman; and in general, every man was conceived to be under *duty* to hold to the religion of his country, (the God of his fathers, as it was called,) and conversion or proselytism was made a civil offence. But Christianity started as a peacefully proselyting religion, and therefore, while true to her origin, maintained, *first*, the right of individuals to cast off their native creed; *secondly*, the sufficiency of individual conviction to determine each man's duty in the matter; *thirdly*, the mental freedom of the individual believer, after, as before, his conversion to what was then called Divine Philosophy; *fourthly*, the union of men of all nations into one body, by entering the church. These are precisely the principles which need now to be restored: they have been overlaid and smothered by reactionary doctrine, which has in great measure brought back the old national religious system. So long as the religion was felt to be one of proselytism, it was in theory one of freedom, and it looked for its guide and rule not to the traditions of the Past, but to the living and Present spirit of God. Out of this its highest energies have always flowed, as often as the doctrine has been recovered. But the rulers of the Church were perpetually terrified by the spirit of liberty which they had evoked,—which of course made itself felt in a disagreeable variety of opinion; hence they constantly fell back on

personal authority and tradition, and used these to overthrow individual freedom.

Christianity does not seem to me (in any practical sense) to have taught the brotherhood of *the human race*, as some have said. It did what Judaism and Mohammedism have done, viz. encouraged proselytism to itself, taught a peculiar love of the brotherhood *within the church*, and general goodwill to those without; but the chasm between the two classes was so vast, that inevitably, as soon as the church became powerful, it despised and trampled down those without. This was but Judaism on a vaster scale. Jews never despised the heathen more cordially, or tyrannized over them so cruelly, as Christendom.

During the early career of Christianity, all civilized nationalities had gone to ruin. Rome had massacred her own institutions last; after which it was as hard for Romans as for Greeks to feel pleasure or pride in their Country. The very idea of patriotism so vanished, that from end to end of the New Testament no such virtue is alluded to. This is certainly no accident. In truth, the state of things which led to so serious an omission was of great avail in strengthening the Christian Church. Energies and selfdevotion, which at other times would have been absorbed in patriotic cares, were dedicated to the Church, which became to thousands more than a Country, being in fact the only institution for which they lived. We cannot expect nor wish a similar state to recur: it implies a widespread despotism, which has destroyed all organic life of communities and established a government of force and of caprice. Justly was this called by Christians the kingdom of the devil; justly did they in contrast love the Church, as the kingdom of God.

During the decay and break-up of the imperial power, the Church accumulated hereditary influence, as every old historical institution must; and when the Roman empire fell

in pieces, the Church, which previously indeed had more or less cemented the parts of the empire, was now in the new and very remarkable position of a moral institution pervading and uniting various civil or military powers; which thus composed a Christendom. Nations, properly speaking, were not yet formed. Invasion followed invasion, so that for many centuries no man knew what was his Country or what the Laws. Italy first recovered itself; but there peculiarly the church was seated, which preoccupied national life. In fact, nearly all who were emphatically religious, made the Church (as an institution and end in itself) an object of direct glorification; with good reason, when morals, laws and letters were found here alone. In this period the energy of the Church, as an institution, was at its highest. Although weaker in each single place than the military power, yet its wide extent and connections made it formidable to every ruler and safe against all.

This period came to an end, when, with the fusing of tongues and dialects into homogeneous modern languages, about the opening of the 14th century, new nationalities became sharply and vigorously developed. This was perhaps the deepest cause of the Reformation*. Previously, the Church alone had a language of her own, which in no small degree conferred exclusive nationality upon her: but now with firm national institutions and well developed mo-

* In the Turkish empire and eastward, there has been no Reformation in the Christian Churches, because the rulers, being Mussulmans, excluded the Christians from high posts of State, and treated them as a lower caste. The Christians had no other nationality than that of the Church to rally to, and in fact threw themselves on to the Church as their sole defence against the hostile State.—The very same cause hindered the Reformation in Ireland, where the mass of the people have at all times been at variance with, and crushed by, the invading English power, and never attained a nationality independent of the Church. During a short moment,—that of the Irish Volunteers,—a true Irish nationality was all but won; but the hope was nipped off by Protestant jealousy, and by the intrigues of the English Court.

dern tongues, new nations and a new patriotism arose, which was certain to undermine the Church, if only by drawing off energies and interest into new channels. Indeed from our Edward I. downward, our forefathers cared more for their nation than for the church, whose ambition and avarice was too manifest. From the time that the belief in her moral superiority was gone, her vital energy went with it. Thenceforward she lived only by the aid of mean superstition or of royal force. She no longer absorbed the noblest minds, yet continued to exact the same submission. This ensured rebellion against her authority.

The two institutions which most vehemently engross the heart of man, are, *Family* and *Nationality*. The latter, I have observed, was not existent, while the Church was in her prime of strength. Not satisfied with the advantage derived to her from that, she proceeded to extirpate the relation of Family in all the holders of ecclesiastical power, by establishing the rule of celibacy. Hereby the energies of her ministers were more undistractedly given to her aggrandizement; but the advantage was surely bought too dearly. Fatal moral weakness has spread from this sore place.

At the same time, ever since the Saxons were forced to baptism by Charlemagne, Christianity had entirely lost its original position and principle as a religion of *voluntary proselytism*. Children had long been looked on as born Christians: any other population was with difficulty endured on the soil. The Jews were everywhere liable to cruel persecutions: the noble and innocent Moors of Spain, when at last overpowered, suffered still worse. The murderous crusade against the heretical nation of Provence long preceded the violences against the Moors. When the true idea of proselytism was lost, when personal conscience was no longer felt to be the reason for professing belief, the religion had ceased

to be a freedom: it was now an imposed slavery; and connected with this was an entire reversal of men's notions as to the sources of Religious Wisdom.

All systems of religion extol Wisdom, in name. We find this alike in the Hebrew book of Proverbs, in the dialogues of Plato, in the heathen Mysteries, and in Christian apostles: yet it is far from clear that the same thing is meant. In fact it is easy to see that panegyrics of wisdom fall under two very different classes; the natural and the technical. The *natural* is simpleminded and humble, conscious that our knowledge is finite, while the things to be known are infinite; aware, therefore, that no teaching can be final and exhaustive,—that each generation ought to add to what was previously attained,—and that, with a view to this, each must draw from the same fountain and inquire with the same freedom. Such was the wisdom of the Hebrew prophets and of the first Christian teachers. Widely different is the *technical* wisdom of rabbis, of "Fathers," and of Protestant divines, more like to that of heathen mysteries. According to this, religious wisdom is a perfect and concluded system, revealed in the past to men who had means of knowing which we can neither have nor understand: to receive blindly is our business, not to inquire; much less to improve, —the very idea of which is offensive. This second sort of wisdom is wholly *deductive:* it assumes authoritative propositions, and seeks merely to develop and apply them. Its function is interpretative solely, as that of the lawyer. It forbids the discovery of new principles or the correction of old ones. However much there may be excellent in the traditionary morality of the Protestant churches, they have formally renounced the function of advancing morality as a practical science. And although the Romish church has not done this formally, (for she claims the Spirit of God ever present with her as with the apostles,) yet in fact her

failure is equally manifest; for no government of Europe has less claim to an advanced morality than that of the Pope.

Nevertheless, in the first 1100 years of Christianity the claim of the Western Church to develop new wisdom adapted to the age was not an idle theory. However difficult it may be (and I think it is impossible) to reconcile with apostolic notions the procedure or the conclusions of early Popery, it must be admitted that the Church of those days did take on herself the problem of infusing moral principles into worldly forces, and of thereby regulating their action. She discussed and solved (in her own way) questions which are not even touched in the New Testament, such as, the rules of War, and the lawfulness of warfare to a Christian. Whatever the excess of ambition in the ecclesiastics, the church collectively was not only the greatest moral power, but the most innovating and onward-moving element in society. Even the religious Orders of those days were more progressive than conservative; and all the newest moral thought came out of the church's own bosom. This was to undertake (however imperfectly she fulfilled) the right function of a Church as distinguished from the State; and perhaps was the deepest fountain of her vast power.

If it had been possible for the Church collectively to move on with her ablest teachers, the whole history of modern Europe would have been different. But the stagnant principle prevailed: men who were typical of the new thought of each age were suspected or condemned as heretics: the mind of the Church was turned backwards to the Past, and its chief business became the obstruction of progress. At the same time, a new source of wisdom had been opened in the restoration of certain classical Latin writers; not to speak of Plato and Aristotle, partially known through translations. Such studies fostered the habit of thinking for one-

self, and, (whatever the intrinsic value of the truths learned in them,) established a totally different condition of mind from that of humble acquiescence in Authority. *Universities* became to many students an organization more dear than that of the Church itself. Nationalities were also developed: legal as well as classical studies emancipated themselves from ecclesiastical dictation, and the highest minds of the day were in virtual separation from or hostility to the Church, which had cut away her own sinews.

A religion which cannot propagate itself is dead. A religion based, originally and in its theory, on proselytism, is selfrefuted when it fears to appeal to the common conscience and common sense of mankind. Into this selfrefuting position the old Romish Christianity fell by its disclaimer of private judgment. When Protestantism arose, (though it soon became conservative and reactionary, on obtaining a little success,) it on the whole saved the principle of *individual conviction*, as distinguished from Authority,—allowed the need of evidence, and succeeded in retaining more vitality of religion, with sectarianism and Court-slavery, in most countries. In the very crisis of the Reformation, the old church equally fell into a degrading and pernicious dependence on selfseeking dynasties. The generals of the Emperor Charles V. took Rome by storm and held the Pope prisoner in his castle. From that date onward, (whatever pretences of momentary freedom the Roman Court may have assumed,) it has really been a faithful tool of the Hapsburg despotism, bent on exterminating freedom and law. Europe now sees with disgust the Pope kept on his throne by foreign armies, and the Italians trodden down for his sake. His dungeons are now better peopled than his churches. A vast revolution of opinion is already consummated; the outward revolution is predestined, and cannot long tarry.

§ 6. Present State of Protestantism.

I have already noticed,—what is too familiar a fact,—the utter failure of Protestantism to avoid a mean, despicable and pernicious sectarianism. To insist once more on the *cause* of this, may not be superfluous. Hundreds and thousands of largehearted people move in the Protestant churches, and even take the lead in them, yet they can do nothing to extirpate the sectarianism which in sincerity of heart they hate: I mean, such men as Dr. Arnold of Rugby, who perhaps has had few fellows in our day. In fact, independently of the artificial difficulties of authoritative articles enacted in the past, an unmanageable knot entangles them, in the endeavour to separate *fundamental* from *non-fundamental* Truth. All allow that *some* truths are not fundamental, and that it would be odious bigotry to eject a person from a church or feel moral aversion to him for denying such truths: else indeed each man must have a church to himself. But then, (it is added,) no less certain is it that *some* truths *are* fundamental; else we might admit into the church persons who denied that Jesus was the Messiah, or the Saviour of the world. Hence even the most liberal Protestant is driven to lay down an authoritative creed, longer or shorter; and few take to heart, that to define *what* propositions are fundamental, is a practical assumption of infallibility at least as presumptuous as to dictate truth in matters which we avow *not* to be fundamental. He who may dictate to us fundamental truth, may dictate all truth; and reduces Protestantism to absurdity. Thus, in fact, the noblehearted Dr. Arnold, imagining that he was making his creed and church commensurate with human virtue, excluded Christian Unitarians as obviously having no part nor lot in it. The fault was not his, but inheres in the very idea of a creed, used as a test of human excellence.

A second point on which Protestantism has broken down, is, in its generally becoming dependent on the State. On the healthy antagonism of Church and State all the progress of modern Europe has depended. If the two are separately subsisting, by forces and organs of their own, yet working together on the same community,—(not as in Turkey, where Turks are nothing in the Christian church, and Christians are nothing in the Turkish state,)—the defects of each are reproved by the other. The Church, needing to support herself by superior goodness and moral wisdom, takes the lead of the State in these qualities: the State, struggling for a real sovereignty, hinders the Church from perverting her rule into one of force, which the State claims as its own. To a certain extent, even under Protestantism, these relations of the two have been fulfilled by the *Low* Church and Dissenting Sects:—at least in England the Puritans and Independents in one century, the Wesleyans and Evangelicals in another, have so acted on the State, as greatly to raise the public morality. But in general the Church and State have become too much identified in Protestantism. In Geneva the Church swallowed up the State, with nearly the same result as when a State absorbs the Church. In England Queen Elizabeth succeeded in her aim, to "tune the pulpits" to her will. The Bishops were awed into becoming her tools. After the Revolution the episcopal bench was filled chiefly with the nominees of the peerage: yet no increase of independence followed. The Convocation of the Clergy was practically extinguished, to save the trouble of reforming and developing it; and the bishops were carefully kept in subservience to the ministry of the day, by playing on their hopes of "promotion" to a higher see. For Archbishop of Canterbury a man is always selected, in whom caution and even timidity prevails over enterprize. These arts of statesmanship have been so effective, that the bench

of bishops have not merely been steady supporters of the ministry, (in every measure that did not sacrifice or threaten ecclesiastical interests,) but have been consistently apathetic as to all moral reform. We were afflicted with venality in the Parliament, as now in the constituencies; with drunkenness in all orders, as now in some of the lowest; with love of war, with profligate taxation, with a cruel criminal code, with corruption in the public amusements, with pauperism, with prostitution, with slavery in our colonies. In no one instance has the episcopal bench initiated efforts for moral reform: in every instance, (as far as I am aware,) the majority has weighed heavily against reformers, when they arose among the laity. In short, the ecclesiastical organs have been so paralyzed by their dependence on the State, as to retain energy for nothing except to resist any reform decisive enough to improve them. Protestantism has done much good, by unfettering the energies of individuals; but the good is done oftener in spite of church-organization than by means of it. The laity and the dissenters, or the low church, work; the high church obstruct;—until decorum brings them over, when the battle is all but won.

Such considerations, and others besides, lead many of the more energetic dissenters to lay great stress on the importance of separating Church and State; which they believe not only to be required by justice and by the Christian religion, (*i. e.* by the rule of the New Testament,) but also to be important for giving energy to the ecclesiastical organs themselves. I am not about to differ from this judgment: in fact, I fundamentally agree with it. The serious mischief done to England by her Established Church is, I think, forcibly seen by turning to the United States of America; where all the same religious sects exist as with us; where the Episcopalians are not only as loftily ecclesiastical as here, but even more uniformly so. Nevertheless, they lay no

claim to regulate the public education, and do not obstruct it. In consequence, in New England and New York a very efficient system of public education is at work, and is extending itself into Ohio and other parts of the Union. But here, the Established Church has long lost the love and reverence of three quarters of the nation, and therefore cannot educate them; yet uses her political position and influence to hinder the State from doing it in the only way in which the people will accept it. Manifestly this obstruction is gratuitous. It is not necessitated by the *creed* of the Church; for the American Episcopalians, with the same creed, have no desire thus to obstruct. The true cause is, *pride of station;* and inasmuch as to separate the Episcopal church from the State, and make it coordinate with other bodies, would bring it into a like mind with that of America, it would exceedingly promote that great cause, national schooling. It would also give to the Church the dignity of self-government, in place of the degradation of an immutable parliamentary creed.

But when our dissenters go farther, and expect some great regeneration from separating Church and State, the example of America again is an instruction. It does not appear that the Episcopal Church *there* is very active for moral good; nor yet that the Congregationalists *here* are much damaged at present by our Established Church:—for they are as efficient on this side of the Atlantic as on that. None of the American churches lead the philanthropic or moral reforms of the day. Among a large part of the community there is an active enthusiasm,—to overthrow slavery, to extinguish drunkenness, to find for women new occupations, and open to them every kind of education; to improve the treatment of criminals, to find new parents for orphans, to instruct the deaf and dumb, and other helpless persons. But the ecclesiastical organs, I believe, give no

aid to any of those objects: some they actively oppose; others they quietly discourage; the rest they ignore. Thus Protestant churches, in their freest development, show that they are not disposed to accept as theirs the moral work of the day. If less encumbered with ceremonies than that of Rome, yet they are effectually encumbered by theology, so as not to come into full contact with the daily realities of life.

As our dissenters impute too much to the *Union* of Church and State, so do our churchmen impute too much to the *Separation,* when the latter ascribe the apathy of American clergymen in the Slavery-struggle to their pecuniary dependence on their congregations. There is much in this, no doubt: but were then the English State-clergy less apathetic, when a similar controversy raged in England? The American preachers (many of them highly estimable and amiable men) publicly and simply justify their conduct by the precepts of the New Testament; and I cannot imagine what right we have to doubt the sincerity of their conviction (which indeed I share), that the New Testament sanctions slavery, as a system; and allows masters to claim and retain slaves as legitimate property, only ordering them to use their right humanely. In fact, this remark gives the clue to the entire phenomenon. The churches cannot take the lead of moral and philanthropic reform of our institutions, *because this function of the Church was never contemplated in the New Testament.* The apostles expected the world soon to come to an end: their sole business (in their own estimate) was, to save an elect people out of it: to improve *the system,* was hopeless, and a superfluous effort. The contrast of World and Church, of the Present and the Future life, is painted by the Christian apostles in intensely strong colours. To prepare for another life, is, according to them, our sole business. Through this life we have to get, as we best may, and help

other individuals through also: but to set our affections on the world which we see, and live to beautify and glorify *it*, is not with them a commendable or imaginable procedure. As then at the Reformation the authority of the *Church* was overthrown, and Protestantism arose; so now the authority of the *Bible* must be overthrown,—an equally great revolution of mind,—if the religion is to become capable of leading the moral energies of our time.

The deadness of the Church as to moral questions, has been illustrated emphatically in the question of Marriage and Divorce. Marriage has always been a peculiarly ecclesiastical affair, yet in abuses appertaining to it the Church organs have not moved. Until about twenty years ago, the clergy retained the privilege and duty of marrying persons who disowned the church and disbelieved the doctrines of the marriage service. A lay and political movement carried at length the Dissenters' Marriage Act, against the will of ecclesiastics.—The marriage of a man to his deceased wife's sister has always been common in England. As no nearness of blood is involved, there is no physiological objection to such marriages. They lie open to the freedom of men's choice; and if many are indisposed to them (whom nobody compels), many find them desirable, and surely ought not to be hindered. But an ecclesiastical traditional list of "degrees" forbids such a union: the courts of law enforce the arbitrary prohibition, and though a Committee of Parliament has strongly reported on the injustice and immorality of it, the influence of the High Church stops repeal. The Church does not debate: it has in fact, on its own ground, nothing to say; for such marriages are clearly permitted in the Old Testament and not forbidden in the New. Her *organs* do nothing visibly, but her *influence* secretly obstructs. The Dissenting Churches are apathetic. —Again; when beating and killing of wives is a daily

event, the Churches will not even discuss, whether personal violences to a wife are not a sufficient ground for Divorce. All moral questions are with them settled by mere tradition.

Some of the moral facts in these Christian countries are truly wonderful. We are shocked at the impiety of the *Jesuit's* oath, "to do whatever the Head of his Order bids him, without asking whether it be right or wrong:" yet no one is shocked that honourable men bind themselves as *soldiers and sailors* to become blind tools of one man's command. An English fleet sails, to do—the sailors are not told what, except to obey their superior officer: they enter a harbour, where friendly Turkish ships are at anchor: the word of command is given, and deadly battle ensues. The Turkish fleet is destroyed, its sailors murdered by hundreds. The news comes to England, and our prime minister mournfully calls it an *untoward event.* We moralize on the difficulty of preventing unforeseen collisions when great forces come within reach of one another; but no outcry is made on the main point, namely, the monstrosity of sending men to fight—they know not in what cause. Unless the principle of treating them as machines were pre-established, no such mistakes would be possible. When war is an honourable necessity (and no other war will be upheld by those who desire public action to be moral) it never loses, but gains, by previous frank exposition of its grounds, which not only wins the assent, but kindles the enthusiasm of soldiers. On the contrary, it is a disagreeable thing to ambitious or unscrupulous statesmen, and to all men of routine, to have to win beforehand the consciences of those who are to fight. In that case we never should have made our last Burmese war, nor our Affghan or Scinde wars; nor have engaged in fratricidal conflict with our American colonies, with Ireland, and with Canada; nor probably should we

twice have assaulted Copenhagen and stolen the Cape colony, —to our affliction. When we look at the Jesuit's oath, I say, we are horrified; for we see the immorality with fresh eyes: but in the case of our army and navy, we are accustomed to it, and therefore justify it; although all history testifies, that armies which are bound to obey blindly are by far the greatest of curses to civilized nations, and have always been emphatically the ruiners of Law and Right.

How then is it, that so deadly an institution lives among us, honoured and unquestioned? I believe, because the Christian religion has wholly omitted to define military duties, and altogether ignores manly virtues. It legislated for slaves;—slaves, all of them politically, many of them socially. Men were in those days (as now by Russia and Austria) kidnapped by the hundred thousand and pressed into warfare. Some of these were perhaps already in apostolic days converted to Christianity, but there is no precept to them recorded. We may conjecture that they would have been addressed, as slaves, with the advice: "If you may be free, use the opportunity; but until that comes, faithfully give obedience in all things to your superior, as to the Lord." This however is only a conjecture, and it is rejected by the Quakers, who maintain *all* warfare to be unlawful to a Christian. While thus on the one hand the most thoroughgoing Christians wish, not to regulate, but to extinguish, military duty; and on the other, the statesmen claim that the established church shall not interfere at all with what is wholly *their* province, but shall merely, in apostolic fashion, inculcate submission to "the powers that be";—between the two there is no middle party strong enough to enforce a *revision* of our military code. The Quaker's attempt to forbid national defence, plays the despot's game, by drawing off into impracticability the energies which ought to reform the army system.

Immensely smaller in the amount of evil, and yet (to say the least) much deserving of reconsideration, is our system of advocacy for pay, which was infamous in ancient Rome, and (as I read) has been introduced into India only by the English: for before we came, no suitor could hire an advocate at pleasure, but the judge had to initiate the matter where he felt it to be desirable. Our Protestant religion is (apparently) too loftily spiritual to deal with *any* of these questions. A clergyman is felt to be offensive, who presses forward his private opinion against any publicly received custom or institution; and the church collectively has no power of debating about them. Some moral evils, superficial in origin, attract Parliamentary debate, and are extinguished by prohibition. But alas! many evils most deadly in character, cannot be abolished by authority; and then the Government itself is helpless. See how many years the evictions and murders have gone on in Ireland, till starvation and emigration began to force a cure: see how paralyzed is the legislature toward English pauperism and prostitution. Yet the church does nothing.

If this were the defect of individuals, it would be occasional and not, as now, systematic. Nothing but new principles can give a new result. In fact, the more closely one examines the phenomena, the more it appears that the precepts of Christianity, given to a small community of slaves which was shortly to be transferred to a better world, are quite unsuited to vast communities of free men which are to be permanent in this world. A slave has no chance of getting justice for himself, and no power to bestow it on another. You had better not talk to him at all of justice: it does but prompt him to insurrection. Justice (says Aristotle) does not exist between master and slave. You may talk to him about Obedience, Submission, Resignation, Humility, Patience; but not about Justice. So also is it in

political slavery. Again: to those in authority, you may preach the judicious and kind *use* of power; but you cannot preach to lay aside illgotten power; or at any rate, the Christian Scriptures do not so preach. There is no fundamental searching into the *Rights* of men; hence, to tell the powerful to do what is *Just,* remains a dead letter. There is a recognition of Kings, but not of Nations; of the rights of slave-owners, but not of the rights of slaves. In the present day, (as at every time of history, except calamitous periods like that at which Christianity was born,) Nationality, next to Family, is the most deeply interesting human bond; but the Christian Scriptures ignore it. To part married persons ("whom God has joined") is looked on as an impiety: to break up national unions, which are so dear to the hearts of thousands that they die for them, is to a *mere* Christian (as if God had not made *them!*) no offence whatever. "His citizenship is in heaven," and whether Cæsar or Pharaoh rules, concerns him not. Many Christians are patriotic, but it is rather in spite of their religion than because of it: for, as I have already insisted, Patriotism has no place in the New Testament, any more than the cultivation of Science and of Art, or the improvement of worldly systems. If hereafter it shall ever be clearly laid down in Church codes, that Jesus was not an allwise teacher,—that neither he nor his disciples knew the Whole Duty of Man, and that their doctrine is unsuitable to this age,—then it may be possible for the Protestant churches to lead the moral movements of the day: but while they hold to the belief that the existing New Testament is perfect and exhaustive in moral wisdom, no different results are to be expected than the last three centuries have displayed. Since it legislated for a transitory, not for an abiding world, from this point of view it was right not to sink capital in a soil of which it had so short a tenure. It did not dream of

rooting up social evils, but bade Christians to *endure* them. It sedulously repressed indignation against gigantic wrong, and forbade taking the redress into our own hands. It did not lay Justice as the foundation of that Love which it recommends; hence it cannot attain Love. It preaches submission to unjust power, on the ground that *all existing* powers are divinely ordained. Such doctrine has hitherto never mended the systems of the world, nor was it intended so to do, nor will it ever do so in the future.

§ 7. Problem of Reconstruction.

That the old churches are worn out, has long been painfully felt by many: nevertheless, serious discouragement in any new attempt arises from the uniform failure which has hitherto attended it; on account of which indeed many have entirely forsworn the very idea as hopeless. Undoubtedly this deserves close examination; for if we retain the old causes of failure, we must of course fail in our turn.

Notoriously, the rock on which all free Protestantism has split, is Sectarianism; which is to sacrifice the Moral to the Ecclesiastical,—the end to the means,—and hereby to prefer one's own partizan above those morally superior; and instead of embracing all the best men in a common union, to set up, with the profession of catholicity, a system essentially partial and exclusive. The evil obviously arises from confounding religious Dogma with Morals, and enforcing such Dogma dictatorially. Indeed in Practical Morals we *must* judge one another, and in some cases harshly enough. If any one is a swindler, a robber, a murderer, we condemn, punish or kill him. Our severity against crime depends to a certain degree on the general conscience: some offences cannot be punished, merely because the national conscience is backward. The time may come, when the seduction of

a woman, (which now is, in itself, no offence,) shall meet a specific and degrading penalty.—But while in regard to moral action we do and must largely judge one another, we cannot justly do so in speculation. Human minds differ enormously in speculative power: we cannot help speculating on the foundation of morals and religion;—in fact, those often do so most, who are not aware of it, and who perhaps declaim against speculation as a wrong thing:—and as it is certain that many will speculate inaccurately, excellent persons often hold very false theories. Generous men will insist that there is no such principle in man as generosity, and that selfishness is the sole acting principle. Self-restrained and conscientious persons avow that self-guidance is an impossibility,—that we are acted upon by necessity, and there is no such power as the will. The most virtuous man is by no means always he who has the truest theory of virtue: hence, however proper it may be for a church to propound, from time to time, its convictions on doctrinal points, it cannot, without becoming sectarian and unjust, impose these as Tests of character on its members. As this is notoriously the chief error and cause of failure in Protestant churches, to avoid this is to win half of our battle.

Another element of sectarianism, perhaps not less noxious, has hitherto inhered in the primary pretensions of every proselyting religion. No brotherhood towards those who join your Union, more intimate than that which exists to those who do *not* join it, must be recognized, or it becomes something artificial, something less large than the brotherhood of humanity. When the "New Commandment" of Jesus was given, *to love one another*, a principle was introduced, without which the religion perhaps could not have stood, yet a principle which ensured that the religion should *not* gather into one all the children of God, but should end, as

Judaism, in scorn and rancour against the "heathen." If we want to form a Union which shall be human, and not sectarian, truly and not artificially moral, we must not admit the idea, that a man *earns a new moral position by joining it.* A very easy mode of amassing merit, is, to submit to baptism, or put one's name in a book. We must take care not to attract mercenary poor persons by the hope of being favoured in their trade, or getting alms more pleasantly; nor to make weak and vain people expect more personal deference and esteem by joining us. All who come, must understand that they will be treated with the moral respect which they deserve and earn, but not with more. The poor must not think that the association is a club or benefit-society, to minister to their individual wants: wealth must not purchase a retinue of clients by church-almonry: the rich man must not fear that he will be taxed for the personal comfort of other members, whom he has no reason for esteeming more highly than thousands who are not members: the good men who (for various reasons) stand aloof, must not have ground to think that they are less esteemed *brethren* by us than those who have joined our ranks. In this way we shall avoid that delusion, which, beginning with blessings upon the "little flock," soon proceeded to pronounce that there was no salvation out of it. Under different names this would soon steal back, if not resisted and disowned by anticipation. But as our modern problem is not to escape *out of* the world as from an unclean thing, but to improve and glorify the world as the mirror of heaven, we have no excuse, and far less temptation, to decry as inferior to us those who do not work with us.

The evil of *affecting* a nearer brotherhood with members of the society than with those without, is also great, in the necessary insincerity which it engenders. In dissenting

churches this is often felt unpleasantly, where they call one another "brother." Out of six persons five may be modest and amiable, but the sixth far less so; and he may make a point of parading his "brotherhood" and of exacting its recognition. It is difficult to deal with such a man. Pointedly to slight him, is to renounce the fundamental principle of the church: to overcome him by yielding, is scarcely possible; in fact you confirm his forwardness. After all, to affect peculiar love to him is a hypocrisy.—And even if the name "brother" is not used, the substance of the evil is incurred, if the principle of some nearer bond than that of common humanity is admitted.

Another danger is common to churches with all other associations of men whatever,—viz. that petty quarrels, rising out of personal diversities and weaknesses, hinder co-operation, cause parties and jealousies, and break up unions. This danger has no proper remedy: neither schism nor war can be argued down. On the other hand, it is no decisive objection, unless it could be shown that *no* voluntary unions of men can overcome our repulsive tendencies. Every association presupposes common ends to be served by uniting; and if those ends are manifestly attained, the good sense of the body generally controuls the factiousness of individuals: or if any will be factious and will not be controuled, they will split off and depart. But in the early stage, before there has been time to attain any practical ends,—before the society has confirmed its hopes,—before its modes of proceeding have so shaped themselves as to exclude needless personal questions,—it may of course ruin itself speedily by want of practical good sense or simplicity of purpose. The very men who have zeal enough for a new attempt may have so strong individuality, that they cannot conform to one another or concede: and the most obstinate may be one who is decidedly wrong. Many good projects

are thus nipped in the bud, nor is there any possible security against it. But then, neither is this contingency any reason against action. Those who will be so full of foresight and so prudent, as not to act till they are secure against failure, will surely have no chance of success. Such persons ought to be called timid and weak, not prudent: they will never commence any noble enterprize: nor must we regret that; for they would probably embarrass it by a perpetual suggestion of difficulties. Danger and loss cannot always be avoided: they must often be met and borne. No great object has ever been won by those who make it essential to avoid them. The eleven disciples would not have founded the Christian church, if they had first taken in hand to ensure against the danger of future quarrelling among themselves.—But while such dangers are absolutely no reason for not acting, they are undoubtedly an excellent reason for taking every precaution which experience and forethought can suggest.

It is an ancient proverb,—The beginning is half of the whole. To begin well, one must start with (however small) a number of persons clearly discerning their object, calmly bent upon it, and *judicious to devise that organization on which all success must depend.* Men make organs; but organs, more than individuals, determine the character of communities, especially voluntary and proselyting ones. For every organized body of men is like a seed, which according to its inner structure attracts one or another element out of the soil, and makes one or another quality predominate in itself. Indeed just as man and man differ not in passions or powers, but in the supremacy or greater vigour of one or other passion or power, so two communities may have nearly the same number of good or bad, wise or foolish members, yet the regulations of one may enable the good and wise to bear rule, and those of the other may

throw power into the hands of the worse members. And when the principle of a community is proselytism, it more and more attracts to itself, according to its inward character, either the good, or the covetous, or the ambitious, as the case may be. If then one could start well;—if five persons of one heart, free from personal ambitions, commenced judiciously, they might attract to themselves twenty of like spirit; and if these by their joint wisdom could enact good regulations for their community, it would be no miracle, nor any way surprizing, if in twenty years it became evidently the Church of future England. When the old is so worn out, we see it is time for a new one. Happily nothing will succeed, which does not deserve to succeed: this must comfort us under the failures of many good designs.

But we must clearly set before us the object to be primarily aimed at, viz. *to attract to our society the purest and freest minds of the age.* Quality, not numbers, is in the first instance to be alone thought of. To be strong, is of course useful; but strength is the result, not of mere numbers, but of steady concord and community of aim. If wisdom and pure desires give concord, strength and numbers will assuredly come *in time.* And unless all that I am writing is fundamental misconception;—if indeed the Church, as distinguished from the State, has been a source of benefit and progress, and ought still to be,—if the existing Churches have ceased to lead, and cannot again lead, our moral progress,—if we aim at so high an end as a new and truly Catholic church, which shall be purely moral, not ecclesiastical and sectarian;—we must be satisfied to take our first steps slowly, and to have an infancy, as all great growths must have. As "the child is father of the man," so, during the infancy of every institution which is to last, the peculiarities of its later state will be impressed on it. Hence, to secure

in the outset that it shall have noble-hearted and wise members, is immensely more important than that they be very numerous. It will suffice at first, if they be numerous enough to cohere into a body, with prospect of permanence. During infancy, every living thing has to grow, and to learn to know itself and its powers; and if for some time they are small, there is nothing in that which ought to discourage, provided only that a warm heart beats within, and that high aspirations and resolutions are cherished deliberately.

Every great community must have local divisions, and each of these must have its internal liberty. Of this the ancient Christian churches are a sufficient pattern. Their common avowal that "Jesus was the Messiah," was their bond of theory; their common enthusiasm was their bond in practice. But while thus far united, each was locally free and self-governed. The local constitutions were framed much on the same pattern every where, yet were freely accepted and not imposed: indeed the nature of the case dictates this arrangement. A central committee may *advise* and *suggest* regulations to the local societies, but the latter must judge of them for themselves. Organization thus compounded, is forbidden by statute in England to all political societies; but in the case of religious and moral societies it is practically permitted. Unless therefore an institution nominally philanthropic were perverted into the sphere of party-politics, no impediment would arise from this quarter. What arrangements would be needed concerning Committees, office bearers and the right of speaking, would remain for leisurely deliberation in forming Bye Laws. A Committee must probably in the first place report on various subjects, (if indeed there be not rather periodical reports for some years, as with the British Association of Science,) and the discussion of these reports would for some time sufficiently occupy the Society. To decide all the funda-

mental principles of organization *rightly*, is of vastly more importance than to undertake any work *rapidly*.

Certain general principles may be here touched on. First, although the same solemnities could not be used as in the old churches,—especially public prayers,—(for diversity of opinion in the present stage forbids it,)—yet solemnity of spirit must characterize every meeting and every public proceeding. Mohammedans have no public prayers, yet they are capable of cherishing a deep gravity of sentiment. Next, every meeting, of whatever kind, must have its Chairman, elected for a term, whose first great duty must be to impress on all present his own earnestness and severe simplicity; and he must have full and undisputed authority to repress every word of rancour or uncontrolled spirit. Again: while questions of mere *convenience* may be decided by counting votes, (except that in these we ought perhaps to give double votes to women,) yet questions of *principle* must never be regarded as determinable by such a method, even though (for the sake of gathering opinion) the vote be sometimes taken. Again: the fundamental ground of union having been reduced to its utmost simplicity, no bye-principles should be liable to be *enacted* as a creed for members; however desirable it may be from time to time for the society to compile and avow its moral principles, as a scientific body also may set forth scientific principles.

In regard to the office of Chairman, I will here drop a word on the high importance of its being unpaid. In a transitory association, to be dissolved when a single definite end is reached, the question is very secondary: not so, in a permanent union. The payment of honourable officers will infallibly generate a clergy, in fact a hierarchy, and degrade the rest into a laity: but on that subject I shall insist more below. Besides, it has other great evils; of which, I here note several. First, it leads to what is popularly called

"jobbery," *i. e.* the desire to establish or support the office, for the sake of paying the man who is to fill it. Well intentioned persons are led into this by zeal for some friend, whom they sincerely believe highly competent for the office. Thus also premature organisms are forced into existence. Again, as we now see in regard to philanthropic and literary societies, it will be sure to happen (through personal likes and dislikes or individualities of mind) that *two* unions are sometimes formed where one suffices,—with a waste of machinery at the least. Now if their officers are paid, each is immediately a rival to the other, by sucking up the funds needed for the support of both: illwill arises, where there ought to be cooperation; and each strives to recommend itself by adopting some distinctive and separating principle. Church history testifies vehemently to this. Then also, after the personal grounds of the schism are worn out, the schism is artificially perpetuated, and the small societies are hindered from blending into one, if this requires that one or other shall discard an honourable pastor to whom the salary is an object. In short, if, as in the Political union, we join honour and *riches*, (and such is the end, if the church prove successful,) we inevitably incur those struggles of faction which so depress the moral worth of State-governments, and we degrade the Church to their level.

Concerning the rights and forms of Address, it will be of prime importance to have wise enactments. At present, our churches and our voluntary societies are generally in one of two extremes: either nobody but a few official persons may speak, and the "laity" are passive; else, every body (in theory) may occupy the time of the assembly, and speak almost without controul except from the manifested displeasure of the hearers. Much better regulated are our houses of Parliament, where all may speak, but under con-

ditions. Indeed, it is a familiar judgment of thoughtful politicians, that the good working of legislative chambers eminently depends on the *forms* which regulate debate. To elicit whatever there is of wisdom in a multitude of well-meaning persons, to prevent the forward and vehement from preoccupying time to the exclusion of the modest and gentle, to repress bitternesses and to limit dulness when it will be simply wearisome,—is surely not an easy problem. Its solution is by no means impossible, yet it will depend on the maintenance of fixed principles, that define and regulate freedom. I take for granted that a society which aims to realize the idea of a Church, as an organization of Philanthropy, must study to secure good will among its own members first, and with a view to this must severely forbid whatever merely irritates. There must therefore be absolute prohibition of what are called "personalities" in speaking. It almost appears to me to have the weight of a fundamental principle, deserving to be inscribed on the walls of such a society, "Bad Systems cannot be overthrown by attacking individual men." But there is a kind of indiscriminate invective, which is not strictly personal, yet offends and exasperates almost as much. I have heard,—at a meeting which professed to be philanthropic, and indeed religious,—invectives against aristocracy and wealth and "priestcraft,"* which to me were so painful, though no part applied to me personally, that I certainly should not choose to go where I expected to hear such discourse. How much less could any be expected to listen, who considered themselves to be attacked. If the object is to heal the divisions of the nation,

* As usual, Bibliolatry supplies the justification of evil. Jesus cried Woe on the rich, and denounced the Priests and Lawyers collectively as rogues, hypocrites and tyrants: James attacked the rich, in far fuller invective than Jesus used: Paul called Elymas a child of the devil, and cursed Alexander the coppersmith: &c. &c.

and blend in good will the different orders and ranks, it is suicidal to permit sweeping hostile attacks against any of them. If any part of our institutions is so deadly in evil, as to justify and require a violent destruction, this is a case for political revolution; a dreadful case, which does certainly occur at some crisis of most nations' history. But such a case is no work for a Church of Philanthropy. Its weapons are different. It aims to work by persuasion: therefore, however great the evils it attacks, the tones of grief must predominate over those of indignation: dry and harsh anger must not be heard: sympathy must mingle with all rebuke, and no attacks be made except with a directly practical aim. I know not how else to express the general rule, but by saying that *Invective* must be prohibited.

Another kind of personal speaking is equally unsuitable, viz. to speak on one's own grievances and those of one's class. Where the grievances are real and great, it would still be an evil precedent to get them redressed by this means; as it might end in every class of subordinates endeavouring to turn the Society into a field for attack on their superiors. In such a Union each must leave *others* to take up his own grievances; but, as once a Roman Emperor said to a senator who spoke to ask relief for his own poverty,—"We do not come to this House to promote our private interests." This would degrade the institution as effectually as to make it an alms-house.

Nor is this all. Of those who discern the evil in systems there are always several classes of opponents, more and less eager; who, though uniting in the same ranks, are apt to attack one another, instead of the common enemy; and this, even from an unfeigned zeal for truth. Each view must be respectfully listened to in turn, but all approach to *altercation* must be checked. No one should be allowed

professedly to *reply** to another, and especially not at the same meeting. If any one has fallen into error as to matters of fact, they may be corrected by another person through the Chairman, without argument. Generally; it must be understood, that the speaking of truth does not mean, that we are to be at liberty to vent all that is in our hearts: nor will it suffice, as in Parliament, to enforce decorum of *expression*, and leave sarcasm to do the work of invective. Nothing will do, short of renouncing personal controversy. This is well understood in pulpits: it is indecent for one clergyman to preach against another.

But besides, I conceive that some other general principles need to be laid down, in the spirit of the following.—"No one, by holding an office, gains any exclusive right of making his voice heard, except in speaking on points of *form*, which it belongs especially to officials to enforce." (Under *form*, I include *manner*, which is sometimes hardly of less importance than matter.)—"No member of the Society is excluded from speaking; yet no one can claim to be heard except under strict conditions, and with a liability to be refused in future, if he violate conditions. Nor can any one claim to be heard often, if hereby he would hinder others from being heard who request an audience. The audience must hear every one with respect, and make no demonstrations of feeling:—approbation will sufficiently show itself in breathless attention."

In order to give effect to these principles, it is evident that no single President or Chairman can have sufficient moral weight; but a Committee is needed, which must be elected periodically and freely. Its duty will be, not, to prejudge opinions, nor to dictate service, but to harmonize the action of the society by enforcing its forms. Ultimately,

* Except when, for an immediate practical question, the whole assembly *resolves itself into Committee.*

(that is, when the organization is complete,) I imagine it will be found desirable to require, that whoever wishes to address the society shall lodge a request with the Committee a certain number of days beforehand, stating his subject, and the time he will require, (as, a quarter of an hour, or a whole hour,) then, after learning how many are thus claiming, the Committee must decide whether all, or how many, can be heard;—enter their reasons in their book if any are put off,—and read out to the meeting their minutes on the subject. This would give the fitting opportunity of remonstrating with any who had previously used the privilege ill. Noisy indications of approval or disapproval being totally forbidden, (as I conceive they must be, exactly as in church or chapel,) tedious and wordy speakers need another sort of check. If any one had notoriously been felt to deserve these epithets, the Committee would be able to lessen the allowance of time to him, as a first reproof, and to postpone him to others, as a second; and as they would need to assign their reasons publicly, there is little danger of their exerting this power except where it was wanted.

Any personalities or vague invective (I apprehend) ought to be checked at once by the presiding chairman: but the offence of *speaking away from the subject* cannot be thus dealt with, else the chairman is supposed to foresee all the bearings of what is being said, before they have been developed. The audience ought to be patient till the time is expired; and afterwards, the Committee will be able to draw up a minute against the offence; and if the same person asks to speak again, he should receive a copy of the minute. Any repeated offences (of whatever nature) against rightful conditions would ultimately be a ground of declining to hear a person.—These remarks are offered only as illustrations of the mode by which a Committee should energetically put down those errors and weaknesses which otherwise will make

the meetings of the society unprofitable or worse than unprofitable. In all these things a majority is presumed to have intelligence enough to discern the right when stated to them: without this, all is vain. The problem of Byelaws and Standing Orders, is, how the good sense of the majority shall controul the impulse or selfcomplacency of a few. A question may arise with some, whether a limit of age should be set for speakers. My own opinion is, that a limit for *admission* into the society should be set, but not for *speaking*. I think that until young men have reached the age of 25, they are liable to deceive themselves as to their moral tendencies, and far less is gained than risked by accepting them formally as coadjutors. Perhaps also the Committee might have authority to give precedence to age, when they choose. But old men are apt to lose more in freshness of eye than they gain in experience; and where *progress* is aimed at, men of 30 are very often wiser than men of 60. We want maturity, but not age. Yet in admitting the impulse and activity of youth, we shall more than ever need a check upon too great harshness of expression.

The power and the license of the Press are familiar phrases with us; but so soon as men become organized, the power of the Tongue for good or evil is still greater. In the most severely moral epistle of the New Testament, James declares that "the tongue is an uncontrollable mischief, full of deadly poison; a fire; a world of injustice; kindling man's whole nature, and itself kindled by hell." A man who does not bridle his tongue is a vexation; but a society which does not, will be a great pest, unless indeed it quickly tear itself to pieces. I feel it needful to press this, because of the power of habit to blind men. Philanthropic and Religious Societies arise, with consciously upright intentions, and follow the falsely democratic rule of allowing unlimited license of speech. Of course this license is used most abundantly by

the men of most impulse and least selfcontrol;—valuable men perhaps, but needing, like many good horses, to be kept in strong harness: for so it is, that the bitterness of "Exeter Hall" has become a by-word. From an opposite quarter there will come deeply sincere and vehement men, capable of much noble service, who in political or socialist meetings are accustomed to speak in no measured terms against the aristocracy and the capitalists of England. To refuse these men as allies, will be impossible: they are too well-intentioned and too earnest: yet no gentle hints are likely to restrain them from carrying the habits of political strife into another society where many of the same objects are aimed at, but aimed at differently. Any true and living Church *must* treat on the moral questions of politics, from their moral side; and as, unhappily, strictly religious solemnities will at present be impossible,—and where these are not, (nay, even in Exeter Hall where they are,) tongue-license is habitual,—nothing short of severe inexorable rules will, in my belief, be able to repress it. If it be allowed, a few strong-speaking men will drive away all who differ from them; and the new Union will soon be found to contain exactly the same individuals,—so many and no more,—as already compose some other society; and absolutely nothing will have been gained by the movement.

For these reasons,—as well as from the general extreme difficulty which impedes discussion among numerous persons widely separated in space,—I hold it to be quite necessary that the Bye-Laws be, in the first instance, made by a comparatively small number of select, thoughtful, well-informed men, contiguous in place, and able easily to confer. Such rules would not be irreversible; nor would they need to be adopted in every locality: but if changed, they would be changed after discussion, and that, a discussion carried on according as they prescribe. It is a wild error to imagine,

(if any do imagine,) that public meetings, as ordinarily conducted in England, are *deliberative* assemblies. They meet, not to discuss, but to declare aloud sentiments and judgments already formed. They would be mere confusion, were they not worked by a Committee behind them. They have their value, only from the lamentable neglect to develop our local institutions; and that value is not such as to make them a model. Never could such meetings devise a plan of operation, or really do more than say Yes or No to a question. I therefore emphatically protest, that, in desiring a Voluntary and Free-speaking Union of philanthropy, I mean something immensely different from these meetings;—namely, an organized genuinely deliberative, co-acting, comprehensive community; not a faction, not a party, not a class or order of men; but including persons most diverse in every other respect, who yet agree in the selfsacrificing love of fellowmen and a fervent desire for justice to all.

§ 8. Doctrines of the Future Church.

But it will be asked,—What, after all, is to be the cardinal profession which will constitute one a member of the Church of the Future, as I conceive it? I am well aware, from my own consciousness, that the first answer of many Theists will be:—"It must be a profession of enlightened Monotheism;—a creed acceptable alike to the philosophical Christian, to the Jew, to the Mohammedan, to Hindoo and Chinese sages;—a creed, proved by all the tendencies of the past to be that into which the aspirations and the judgments of all nations will finally converge." But on approaching the practical question more closely, I find that such a reply involves a common delusion. Theists, if they attempt to make and enforce upon one another an intellectual creed, will, as infallibly as any class of Christians, split

themselves up into sects, and perhaps into very bigoted ones. Unless they intend their creed to embrace Polytheism and Paganism, they will need to define the attributes of the Deity; and questions will arise as to what is meant by his Omnipotence and his Government of the world. Some will regard omnipotence as no more concerned in making or unmaking the laws of gravity and cohesion, than in making or unmaking the properties of the circle: with others, it will be the cardinal point of true Theism to believe that Matter and all its powers are *creations*, and not mere *manifestations*, of the divine Will. So soon as any attempt were made to unite in Praise or in Prayer, the diversities of sentiment would become prominent. Many things for which some would desire to pray, would seem to others equally wrong, as to pray for a reversing of the laws of gravitation. I do not deny that Theists could harmoniously cooperate, without schism or sects, while engaged on objects which in no respect required that their Theism should be *defined:* but, so long, why might not Pantheists or Atheists, if morally as good as some of them, also cooperate? To hold intellectually a Theistic creed, is surely no guarantee of moral goodness: and if Pantheists are to be excluded, it cannot be simply as morally unworthy, but because some work is being undertaken, for which they are obviously incapacitated. In my closing section I may touch on the after-formation of friendly sects, or rather branches, within the same moral community: it suffices here to indicate my opinion that the attempt to enact a well defined *Theistical creed* as the test of admittance to the society, would at once secure that it should not be One society, but Many; and would, at starting, reproduce the old phenomena of religious controversy, with extreme discouragement and probably with a rapid and total failure.—If on the contrary the creed, though in phrase Theistical, were purposely left with great latitude, it would

be found practically to embrace many Pantheists, while it excluded Atheists and Sceptics. Yet the latter class agree far more nearly with Pantheists, than Pantheists with Theists: and though I dare not say it universally, yet I believe that *often* the Pantheist differs from the Atheist only in a more mystical phraseology and in a more cloudy intellect. It is true that this cloudier intellect may be accompanied with a deeper tendency to veneration, perception of beauty, and contemplative feeling: but it appears to me obviously improper, to enact, as the basis of a great moral community, a form of words which is purposely left obscure, and which will often shut out the honest and upright, while it admits others who have no substantial difference of judgment from the former, but are simply more mystical in their *forms* of thought and expression. We want a union, which shall be Substance, not Form. I am aware that some, whose judgment I highly esteem, hold as an abstract principle that no firm and coherent Morality is possible, without Religion in the back-ground. "Theism* is the indispensable postulate of conscience, without which its inspirations would be illusions: its veracities themselves a lie." It is not my intention to deny this; on the contrary, my tendency is strong to believe it. But there are two ways of applying the principle. The one is, the easy, current mode of saying to the avowed Atheist: "Your creed proves you to be an unprincipled man, ready for every wickedness: therefore we will shut our eyes to your goodness, and do our best to persecute you out of society,—out of humanity." The other is, to say: "We see that many avowed atheists are far more conscientious than some sincere theists: we must infer that they are likely to become theists by the force of an inevitable

* I quote from an article in the West. Rev. Jan. 1854, which is above my praise: (*English Religion*:)—I have no doubt whatever, that the author will assent to the latter, and not to the former, application of his principle.

logic, if we do not disgust them with theism by our injustice. And meanwhile, is not the man whose conscience devotes him to moral principle, really worshipping the highest attribute of God? and is this not a far higher thing than an unpractical intellectual acknowledgment of a God?"

Experience warns me to add a protest, that to disown every creed as a test of individual character is not to treat abstract truth as unimportant. I believe that in the long run error always works moral mischief, even in Metaphysics or in Astronomy; and Truth is in itself to be valued: but one who errs in these topics, confessedly, is not thereby shown to be a bad man, nor will you mend his error by unjust severity. A bad church-theory determines that a church shall be bad; yet very many individuals of such a church, if it be large and lasting, are eminently good. To say that men who hold immoral or atheistic theories are not forthwith to be regarded as bad men, is not at all to say that such theories are not bad things. It is indeed wonderful that one needs to insist upon the distinction. But, believing as I do that religion has a very deep root in man, I expect that the Church of the Future, if it begin with an earnest morality and avoid all dogmatism, will inevitably *become* religious in the truest and deepest sense, even though it talk of religion barely as our poets talk.

We return then to the question: What is to be the fundamental ground of union? for a moral test-creed will be as hurtful and as absurd as a theological one. Assuredly: and it is not the profession of a *theory* that we must seek and accept, but the profession of a *practical intention*. It will not do to receive any one at random as member of the society, nor yet can it be right to exercise any judgment upon one who is a candidate for admittance,—except in the extreme case of his conduct being publicly scandalous: but we may require of him a solemn declaration, that "he de-

sires to join our union, not from selfish or ambitious motives, but, believing that Moral* Excellence is the highest good of man, and desiring to promote that good, in himself and others, through Justice and Love." The form of this declaration ought to be the same rigidly in all the branches of the society, as their specific bond of union, and therefore it would be proper to have this in the first instance carefully drawn up.

After much consideration, I have persuaded myself that it cannot be needed, and therefore is undesirable, to make a renunciation of Bibliolatry and Ecclesiolatry fundamental to the society, although I have no doubt, that for practical utility it is essential that these idols be renounced. But in truth there is not the least danger that the ruling part of the old churches will be deficient in hostility to such a new society: hence no avowed Christians are likely to join it, except such as are peculiarly liberal and largehearted. These ought not to be shut out; and they will be more likely to lose any remaining Bibliolatry by their entrance, than to infuse it into others.

In the candidate's profession just laid down, no moral *doctrines* are assumed and enacted. If a Milton proposed himself, believing polygamy to be moral and rightful, he would not be shut out of the society thereby. So long as it was a speculation with him, it might possibly be disagreeable, but it would be borne with. If however this, or any other moral eccentricity, took a practical shape which appeared scandalous to the community, a delicate practical question might certainly arise: but it is not new with churches or other associations, nor is it to be expected to occur often in any one place.

Nevertheless, the power of Exclusion, so essential to every

* If for the words Moral Excellence any Theists prefer the words, "to b like to God," this should be left *ad libitum*, to save verbal controversy.

voluntary society, has been so much abused, and is become so odious under its ecclesiastical name Excommunication, that it may here deserve and need some remarks, more particularly since to inflict exclusion on purely moral grounds is a social stigma and might take a form involving legal controversy. In the first place, it seems impossible to forbid, in the abstract, all disowning of members; since a person may be so quarrelsome and uncontrollable, that nothing short of suspending him from the exercise of every right given by the society to its members will hinder his being mischievous to all its objects. Next, it seems equally necessary to admit that every locally constituent part of the society will most appropriately judge, what is necessary in this respect for its own defence. For on the one hand the facts cannot ordinarily be known except locally: on the other, the local society is the immediate sufferer from the misconduct of the individual: we may add, that when it meets, whether in a building of which it has the ownership or in one which is hired by its money, in the nature of the case it has a peculiar right to regulate its internal proceedings. Nevertheless, in thus conceding to every locality its sovereign authority to exclude members who are found to be vexatious and dangerous, or whose moral conduct and position is felt to be scandalous, the entire society is by no means bound to approve and adopt whatever is done by a local part of itself: and it would be very unwise to lay down such a compact; for then, if any extreme views arose locally, these would instantly be dictated as a law to all. For instance, —suppose one branch of the society to exclude a member because he would not take the Temperance pledge, but drank wine and rum, or because he had a commission in the army; it would be highly unreasonable to expect the whole society to back up their decision. And inasmuch as every one, by accepting the fundamental declaration, enters no one local

part of the Society, but the Society generally, it follows that no authority can exclude him, which does not represent the Society collectively. Yet no local unit can claim this position; and it can scarcely be worth while, or even safe, to have a *judicial* machinery which can. Thus we seem to reach the general result, that Excommunication from the entire society is impossible: yet that every part of the society may (for the sake of its internal peace or decorum) suspend all rights of a member within its own sphere; which is, *in so far*, a virtual excommunication. To this it only remains to add, that, as a general rule, the decision of one part of the society to suspend—within its jurisdiction—a member's rights, might be accepted by all the rest as a *præjudicium*, which any other local Committee is permitted to follow as far as it pleases. Thus, if the society at Manchester had deprived a member of his right to speak or otherwise act, and the person presented himself at Birmingham to the local committee there, this body, having cognizance of what had been done at Manchester, should (I think) be free to adopt and act upon what had been there decided, or, on the contrary, to take no notice of it. Whichever they did, they should report publicly. In this way unreasonable eccentricities and injustices of certain parts, (ruled perhaps by a clique,) would be exploded by the rest; but exclusions resting on necessary moral grounds would be reaffirmed and continued.

So much refers to practical conduct. But as regards *speculative* error,—be it immoral in our opinion, or be it atheistic,—however dangerous it seem to us,—there is no overcoming it by dictatorial frowning, when the person who holds it is pure and upright. Indeed, it is high time, that, after so much glorification of Creeds, there should at length be a recognition of Human Goodness as a bond of union and of cooperation. If, as has been believed, there is a

spiritual world, in which God is known directly; the blessed angels in it have not, as their basis of union, their belief that God exists and rules; for the devils also believe, and tremble. It is a common *love of goodness* which there unites angels, and disunites them from devils, who see the Good and love it not. If then the love of goodness is admitted by Jews and Christians to be the discriminating mark of HEAVEN, what school of opinion can hold that this in the CHURCH is to go for nothing, but that to recite and acquiesce in propositions believed by devils is the spell to open the Church-gates?

While thus it seems to me unpracticable, unwise, and unjust to attempt to impose any creed whatever, religious or moral, I nevertheless fully believe that whenever the new society arises, it will work out its own doctrines, as surely as do the schools of astronomy and of philosophy, although they impose no test-articles. If I think that I know what some of the doctrines will be, it is not as dictating, but as discerning, in the movement of opinion, what they are certain to be in particular directions. I will state them, for clearness, in contrast both to the current notions of Christian churches, and to the crude ignorance of those who would disown our debt to the past.

If we are opposed to the modern churches, it is *in part* because they have degenerated;—have adopted as their predominant doctrine, some unfortunate error which was exceptional with him who first broached it, but which they have made to outweigh or annihilate much that he held. In truth, all religious and moral reformers seem to have much in common. In the present day, they have to contend for the freedom claimed and used by Luther, by A Kempis, by Paul, by Jesus, by earlier sages. In every age, much that is preached as new, was preached long before, then also as new. Jesus and Samuel and probably Moses preached

righteousness and *inward goodness*, as distinct from *ceremonialism;* yet Jesus was in apparent collision with Mosaism. So was Paul; yet he often appeals to Judaism itself as justifying his principles.

There are however some essential points in the popular creeds which need to be reversed and will be reversed.

They assert man's Natural Depravity. They represent him as a product which God disowns; a product, which it is a sort of blasphemy to ascribe to Him. They assure us that nothing so wicked as Human Nature ever came, or could come, from the divine Power. What *He* created was pure and perfect, but, after it had come out of the divine hand, another Being marred it. Thus human nature is not only frail and weak and liable to go wrong, as every finite being must be; but is *degenerate*, fallen, depraved, condemned, powerless to amend, without sympathy for things spiritual, certain to become worse and worse unless God had miraculously interposed to save and to heal. Thus also man is so blind, that he cannot discover or judge of true religion.

I do not say that this is the doctrine of the New Testament. There are a few strong passages in this direction, but to those who interpret the whole liberally and not technically, the opposite evidence immensely preponderates. Nevertheless, it is certain that all the great churches of Christendom have committed themselves irrevocably to the tenet of Man's Hopeless Depravity;—not only the Church of Rome, but all those which sprang out of the Reformation. In these islands, the Church of England, the Puritans, the Independents, the Wesleyans and Baptists, the Welsh Dissenters, the Scotch Church, and all its branches, agree in holding it: only the Unitarians, in quite modern days, have rejected it. In this doctrine the churches ground the necessity of Infant Baptism, and of the Atonement. To reject it, would imply an entire reconstruction of their theology.

Yet it is remarkable, that the educated mind of this century renounces the doctrine with peculiar unanimity. It is discerned to be imbecile, undeserving of refutation, indeed selfrefuting, because it involves essential scepticism, by making it impossible for us (or at least for the unbaptized) to judge of alleged revelations or to attain any tests of religious truth. By degrading man to an unreligious (and in so far, to a brutal) rank, it justifies him in irreligion. Such is the view taken of this tenet by the great mass of the Christian laity of England and of Europe. There is then no doubt that it will be emphatically rejected in the Future.

Akin to this is the doctrine, which contrasts Nature to God. Yet indisputably there is no other manifestation of God. Indeed, so far as the material and animated Universe (independently of man) is concerned, the Scriptures, old and new, agree with common feeling and belief: the opposite judgment is rather Puritanical than Christian. Nevertheless, in so far as *human* action enters into and affects the world, it is strictly Christian sentiment, which represents the whole as ungodly. In Christian theology the *present* world is opposed to the *future,* and is represented as something intrinsically bad, not deserving our affections nor our exertions. It is a vale of sorrows. It is the kingdom of darkness. It is a momentary tabernacle, not an abiding city. It is soon to be burned up, and succeeded by new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Such a conception we now see to be the sombre view of men who were unhappy enough to live under the Roman Cæsars. We respect it, as we respect and pity misfortune; but we cannot share it. On the contrary, the doctrine which will prevail in the Church of the Future on this subject has been already announced by an eloquent pen: [West. Rev. Jan. 1852: p. 220.]

"Divine things are not put away into foreign realms of "being and future reaches of time, attainable by no path of "toil, no spring of effort, only by miraculous transport; "but are met with every day, shining through the sub- "stance of life, and hid amid its hours. . . . . We do be- "lieve that the great change for which the secret religi- "ousness of this age pines, and which it is sorely straitened "till it can accomplish, is, the deliberate adoption into "'heavenly places' of this world, its faculties and affairs, "just as God has made them, and man's unfaithfulness has "not yet spoiled them. . . . . Men are tired of straining "their thought along the diameter of the universe to seek "for a holy of holies in whatever is opposite to their life. "They find a worship possible, even irresistible, at home; "and on the roadside a place as fit to kneel as on the pave- "ment of the Milky Way. The old antagonism between "the world that now is, and any other that has been or is "to come, has been modified for them, or has even entirely "ceased. The earth is no place of diabolic exile, which "'the prince of the power of the air' ever fans and darkens "with his wing. . . . . It is not only the home of each "man's personal affections, but the native country of his "very soul; where first he found in what a life he lives and "to what heaven he tends; where he has met the touch of "spirits higher than his own, and of Him that is highest of "all. It is the abode of every ennobling relation, the "scene of every worthy toil; the altar of his vows, the ob- "servatory of his knowledge, the temple of his worship. ". . . . He is set here to live, not as an alien, passing in "disguise through an enemy's camp, where no allegiance is "due and no worthy love is possible, but as a citizen fixed "on a historic soil, pledged by honourable memories to nurse "yet nobler hopes. *Here* is the spot, *now* is the time, for "the most devoted service of God. No strains of heaven

"will wake him into prayer, if the common music of hu-
"manity stirs him not."

In man there is a conjunction of the Infinite and of the Finite. Our *Intellect* has to do with the Indefinite and the Infinite; while our *Affections* and *Action* rest principally or necessarily in the Finite. Every abstraction is in some sense infinite; but every concrete object, every thing sensible, is finite. Our minds fitly rove in Heaven and in the Depth and at the ends of the earth: excursiveness is their nature, and eminently conduces to their health and force. But our actions *must* be close at home, and our affections *ought* to be peculiarly there. The smallness of our sphere matters not, if we work in it with an angel's soul. But so perverse has popular religion been, that it has forbidden each branch of our nature to fulfil its legitimate function. When intellect strives indefinitely and insatiably after knowledge, when imagination wanders into extremest space or time, or creates worlds of melody and beauty, we are reproved for vain curiosity, and admonished to employ ourselves on something more useful to us after death. When the affections concentrate themselves on individual objects, as is their nature, then again we are warned to "sit loose" to the things of time, and not to set our affections on things of this earth.—In all such precepts the religion has lost its hold of that *moral* element from which it started, and which (in comparison to Paganism) was very strong in it. Sin does not inhere in matter, nor in one world or one time more than another. God is not the antagonist of Matter, nor of Nature, but of every thing unnatural; and of all things, Sin is the most *unnatural*. Opposition to nature, is perhaps the definition of Sin; as, rightly to develope nature, is the definition of Virtue, or of Holiness.

Out of the error concerning man's Depraved Nature, rises (it seems) another concerning the *evidences* of Religion.

The prevalent opinion, (which is incorporated with the authoritative teaching of Protestant Universities and Academies,) is, that Religion is necessarily to be received (by all except inspired apostles) *on testimony*. According to this view, the religious truths to be believed are mainly events of Past human history, which, with their interpretation, were authoritatively communicated to some apostle or prophet, on whose attestation we are dependent. Perhaps the Roman church never committed itself to such a theory; yet it has, equally with Protestantism, made History to enter the very essence of religion: nor is this a corruption of Christianity, but the primitive unavoidable doctrine. But so soon as men break loose from traditional creeds, it will (I believe) become an axiom with them that religion is not concerned with any details of human history, but solely with the existing abiding relations between God and man;—that it can never depend on testimony concerning past events or dead men, but on insight concerning ever-present facts.

To sum up: the popular creed presents to us an unholy Earth, an incorrigible World, an absent and offended God, an external mode of Reconciliation to him, a distant and future sphere of Affection, and the evidence of Hear-say concerning all. In place of these the new Religion will teach a venerable Earth, an improvable World, a present and unchangingly benevolent God, inward Reconciliation of the human heart to Him, a present sphere of Affection and Exertion, and the evidence of personal Insight.

One doctrine which the churches teach, needs to be taught more intelligently, viz., the Unity of Mankind. This ought not to be understood of descent from common parents,—a lower notion, which has played its part: but we must rise to a higher. Our unity in species is a present reality, which undeniably exists, independently of any theory respecting the causes. When two men meet, each knows that the

other is a MAN: this expresses a present certainty, whether the primitive parents were two or two thousand. We presently discern in one another, not only external likeness of form, but sameness of propensities and of powers. With fuller acquaintance we find common sympathies, common moralities, common aspirations, common intelligence; with capacity for entering into domestic relations, and mingling our blood into one stream. So long as mixed races arise between every two portions of human population that live in juxtaposition, to deny the unity of mankind is either a technical and arbitrary use of terms, which, under pretence of scientific distinctness, obscures a far grander fact; or, is the perversity of men who desire to justify inhuman wrong. We need say no more about that, except to protest against the folly of looking to the Past and to Theories for the evidence of that which is Present and Fact.

An immediate necessary inference from the Unity of Mankind, is, the impartial complacency of the Divine mind towards all races of men; or, in the language of Paul, "One God over all is rich to all that call upon him." Paul's Jewish persecutors discerned more truly than he did, that this was to pronounce the Jewish belief that the most High felt peculiar favour for them, a fundamental delusion from the beginning. A nation can become "the peculiar people" of God, only by the individuals of that nation becoming inwardly and personally conformed to the will of God. HE changes not. To talk of "dispensations" as a reason why *He* should practise favouritism, is simply confusion of thought.

A second inference follows from the unity of man, viz., the mutual dependence of nation on nation, and age on age. Because we are finite, we cannot be made perfect by ourselves. Each individual, or each nation, makes some little start in improvement, but soon stops, unless aided by

another. By mutual intercourse, each imparts to others what he has attained; and since the Mental and Spiritual is not consumed by being imparted, every one might receive the accumulated riches of all. When some have thus gained a higher development, they start with advantage for new discoveries; and the process of communication being repeated, the onward movement is redoubled. A nation left to itself, whether a China or a Judæa, before long attains its maximum of wisdom. Permanent progress seems to be possible, only when several stocks of people, diverse in the form of their civilization and mental tendencies, cooperate. Diversities of language, hitherto, have been looked at chiefly as vexatious impediments to communication, or fatal causes of national hatred. In the dawning future, they will be felt as the beneficent conservators of national individuality, giving hereby greater variety to the human mind. Nor only so: but as the learning of language is the great stimulus to the infant mind, and the easy vehicle of immense stores of thought, so the early acquisition of two languages or even three, (which involves no difficulty whatever to children, and no strain of the faculties such as scholastic tasks inflict,) will be regarded hereafter as an ordinary means of education plainly pointed out by Providence, to enlarge the understanding, enrich the sentiment, and prepare the heart for cosmopolitan impartiality, without impairing patriotism.

We do not sufficiently know the laws of national intelligence to dogmatize concerning them; but in modern days we distinctly see, how the cooperation of many nations produces richness and depth in literature. Ancient Greece also was a mongrel of many tribes, much diversified, besides the stimulus derived from Lydia, from Phœnicia, from Egypt. In fact, Judaism itself was founded on Sabian and Persian conceptions, though it had also a noble native development: Christianity grew out of Judaism, modified by

Persian and Platonic thought. The doctrine of Heaven and Hell, of Angels and Devils, notoriously was not Mosaic nor Davidical, but was adopted by the Jews from Babylon. The Incarnation and the Trinity were taught in Hindostan long before Christian times. Such phenomena ought to teach modern Christians a different tone towards those whom they ridiculously charge with *stealing* and *plagiarizing* their notions. As if we did not live to learn! As if Christianity had borrowed nothing! As we are all of one species, so do we live one life. We inherit and reap the truths of the Past, and we are of course also liable to imbibe its error. In trying to clear off the false, we must not cast away the true, nor disown our relationship to our predecessors. We are children of our fathers, brethren of our brethren, in mind, as in body.

Those who strive after a New Moral World are apt to fall into the error to which some Christians exhort them,—of disowning the Past. Let them consider this:—if there was no truth in the generations which are departed, *we* have no immunity from error and no security that our notions are not equally baseless. Why should not the next generation sweep off *our* notions with as little ceremony? If there was nothing good or right in the Past, neither will there be in the Future. Our sole guarantee or hope of Progress, lies in the belief that we *inherit* treasures which make us richer than our fathers. Though not individually stronger in mind or body than they, yet we work with more tools, more abundant capital. Really to start afresh, (if that were possible) would be to recommence barbarism.

The experience of the schools of Science makes our relation to the Past very plain. So long as men, calling themselves philosophers, tried to set up independent and new systems, without building on their predecessors, they could establish nothing. By far the most permanent school of

antiquity was that which was most comprehensive in erudition and most used the thought of its predecessors, namely, the Aristotelic. But the works of Aristotle came to be used like a Bible, to supersede independent thought: I believe that this was the reason why at length the school decayed. Be this as it may, it is certain that in the schools of Mathematics, Physics and Physiology, men judge most freely; they never are in bondage to predecessors, or believe because they are told to believe. Nevertheless, only those who diligently study and use their predecessors are competent to advance the sciences. *Suggestion of truth* is what men most need: when it is once clearly stated, in spheres concerning which we have means of observing and knowing fact, ordinary minds manage to verify it. Thus while we are immensely indebted to the laborious thought of others for Suggestion, we do not accept their statements on authority, but judge of them for ourselves. Only a most rare genius could originate and complete a treatise on Geometry; yet when it is written, a common schoolboy can master it. Warned by such experience, we may understand how unwise it is to undervalue in morals and religion the lessons of the Past, and how false to think that we cannot learn of a master without bowing to his authority. To imagine the last, is an error common to popular Christianity and to an innovating school most intensely opposed to it.

In regard to Wealth and Luxury the Christian *theory* is that of asceticism quite extreme, and therefore the practical doctrine is that of entire selfindulgence. The doctrine which we need to have preached and practised,—to the rich, is, to find their pride and pleasure in making their wealth minister to public enjoyment; to break down no man's independence by doles of alms, but to give in such a way as to make future gifts needless; to keep down vulgar extravagances in dress and upholstery and dainty entertainments,

but spend in preference on beauty of pure form and colour, on whatever is substantial and permanent, and on all the products of superior mind. But to the poorer it must be preached, not to covet an exterior, which they cannot sustain without sacrificing what is better. In fact, the most powerful preaching will be, to make it felt that no exterior, such as dishonesty may temporarily assume, facilitates admission into refined society. If richer men invited to their drawing-rooms whomever they found to be morally *worthy*, although in meaner and poorly paid occupations, it would presently stop the unwholesome race after wealth, it would arrest Bankruptcies, and immensely diminish the cares which eat men's heart up.

Beauty and Art and Science have been eminently cultivated by individual Christians, but they have no place in the theory of Christianity. The Church of Rome has known how to use Painting, Music and Architecture as aids, or far oftener as substitutes, for religion; but with Protestantism these things have had little connection. There is no doubt that they will all be duly appreciated, and assigned to their respective duties, in the dawning religion, whether as beautifying human life, or also as connected with any religious rites.

A protest, it is to be hoped, will also be enunciated in some form, against that extreme appropriation of men to one work, which converts them into tools. In savage life, every man is largely occupied with martial exercises and other healthful action. This is indeed carried to a great excess: the mind is starved, that the body may be exclusively developed. But in English habits an opposite error is committed. That which ought to be the exercise and healthful play of all,—soldierlike and manly skill,—is taken away from the community, and given to a single class; while the vast majority have dull, unrelieved, mechanical labour; and

the only relaxation which many would be willing to let them have, is either purely scholastic, or of a gentle feminine kind: so intensely unmasculine is the idea of virtue which is current in the churches. Men indeed have monopolized women's work. Statesmen also seem to be pleased that all the men of the nation should be made women, except the soldiers whom they reserve to be mere tools of power. New principles must be loudly published on these points, and a revolution of opinion take place, before English industry can become healthy, English workmen contented, or the public peace of Europe safe.

Concerning the occupations of Women our transatlantic friends are leading us by the hand. Unless women are made more able by far to support themselves, the newly-invented Washing Machine and Sewing Machine will enormously add to the helplessness which the Powerloom and Spinning Jenny have caused; and the sad state of females will grow worse and worse. But in fact, the whole position of the female sex needs to be reviewed, and the subject is too large for this place.

§ 9. Work of the Future Church.

That there will be no want of work for the Future Church to do, if it have but strength to do it, will be clear to those who conceive of its function, as an Organizing of Philanthropy. The moment this is stated, just the opposite fear comes over one, namely, that through the immense variety of urgent calls, efforts will be distracted into too many directions.

Probably at no other time, since man has been on earth, has there been so vast a philanthropic energy in existence, as now in each of the three great nations, British, Anglo-American and German. But because it is unorganized, it

has seldom power to go to the roots of evils, and extirpate the causes; and a great deal of it is necessarily wasted, because the persons who desire to cooperate cannot find one another. The Philanthropy of Christianity has been pure in intention, and, especially under European freedom, has given a powerful impulse to philanthropic *desire;* but the circumstances of its unfortunate birthtime have determined that its efforts (so far as they are connected with the churches and theology) shall be always superficial. Biblical philanthropy is pervaded by the poison of despondency. It treats the world as a hospital, the multitude as a mass of necessary and permanent paupers. To palliate evil by temporary relief, is its highest effort, its only aspiration. To set before the eyes a brilliant ideal of what this world might become and ought to become, would seem to savour of "unbelief." To bestow alms on the poor, to distribute at Christmas blankets, clothes, soup and coals, are the philanthropy which is congenial to the Christian church. But if an eccentric clergyman here or there inquire into the *causes* of poverty, he is thought to trespass on to political and doubtful ground; much more, if he trace them to some injustice in our institutions, and claim that it be removed. A scandal yet worse than mere poverty afflicts and disgraces England,—a vast class of degraded women, living, or rather dying, by the vice of men. Philanthropic attempts are made for the recovery of a small fraction of these outcasts; but to examine the *causes* of the permanent disease and try to remove them, does not occur to the church as a proper problem for it. Spiritual concerns sufficiently occupy the clergy, and the laity count for nothing in church organization.

I have already deprecated the idea that a church is a large almshouse, to which poor men are to be attracted by the liberality of rich members. The protest is far from needless. Owing to fundamental precepts and doctrines of Christianity,

in spite of Paul's noble and vigorous protest for a higher conception of Charity or Love, the eleemosynary notion has stuck fast in Christian churches, so that Charity is most hurtfully identified with pecuniary mercies. Modern times have produced deepsearching philanthropists by hundreds, but no relation establishes itself between them and the churches.

The fear of perverting religion into "politics" is certainly one cause, why there has been no cooperation of Christian churches for a fundamental attack on social evils. The most remarkable approach to such a thing in our day, was the movement of the Dissenters against West Indian Slavery. I refer to this now, as an illustration, that such action against social evils does not necessarily entangle religious societies in party-politics. In fact it was notorious that the king's ministers, some of whom *spoke* vehemently against slavery, (as Mr. Canning,) did not dare to *act,* because they could not afford to encounter the slavery-interests. The ripening of public opinion is generally waited for by our rulers. Tories and Whigs alike preach this doctrine,—it seems, because they have no spare energies to move the public: this then is a duty which they willingly, as well as necessarily, see performed by others. Whether the Churches, or a political association, stirred up the nation against slavery, was a matter of indifference to every possible ministry. The same may be said of Corn Law Abolition. If the "League" against the now extinct Corn Laws had been planned and conducted by the bench of Bishops or by the University of Oxford, this would be *now* looked on as a highly creditable fact to either body, and during the struggle, would in no respect have deranged either Church or State: nor would it have involved either ecclesiastical organ in party-politics. Here we see the enormous waste of effort in our present mode of proceeding. The machinery of the

League was in the course of seven years brought to high efficiency, and then,—its single limited object being gained, —was suddenly dissolved. Under the circumstances, faithfulness, no doubt, demanded this: but such a mode of proceeding is to pay so vast a price for every reform, that, except where their pecuniary value to the reformers is greater still, to cooperate for them is impracticable.

The value of an excitement like each of those which I have here named, is great, in the exhibition of personal character, the mutual confidence inspired, and the power of after-cooperation for objects of a similar kind which is thus attained. Nearly all this value is wasted, when an organization is dissolved. Fifty years ago, the dread of Jacobin Clubs would have effectually stopped any permanent union for indefinite social objects; but we have now learned, that revolutionary violences are impossible, where peaceful legal action against social evils is the normal state. An Anti-slavery Society or Free Trade Union, spreading its discussions all over Russia, would in all probability revolutionize that empire; but neither of them threatened any explosion in England. We therefore must not allow ourselves to be alarmed, as though a society of practical philanthropy, with indefinite aims, would or could be perverted, under the old freedom of Great Britain, as the Jacobin Club was, at the crisis when France was breaking loose from old despotism and attacked by foreign arms to reimpose it. But I may add, a philanthropic society which aims at a reform unattainable without some change in the law, does not necessarily (in so far) confound itself with a purely political society which has as its sole object the repeal of that law. The latter holds itself ready to enforce its aims (when it can) by the removal of a ministry or by the rejection of Parliamentary candidates:—which are, in a constitutional struggle, analogous to war between nations. They are an application

of force to those on whom arguments fail. Now it would be possible, by the Bye Laws of a philanthropic union, distinctly to forbid applying the organization of the society in this civil warfare: and there is an obvious reason for it. The moral damage accruing permanently from the heats of resentment, to a society which can only do good through superiority in calm wisdom, is ill repaid by speedier success in one definite enterprize. Besides, deep discontent may be caused to a valuable minority of its own members.

No greater error, I believe, could be, than for a Society which aims at permanence and indefinite good to overrate immediate success in a single object, and for it to sacrifice any portion of its vital force. If by *work* is understood "action that affects those without," we must not be too eager for immediate work. To exist, is earlier than to act; and our first action is for and on ourselves, not on others. Even if we may presume, that the persons who are to enter the new church are all ready, and that no process of *conversion* is required, yet, in spite of the modern facilities of locomotion, preoccupation will impede mutual acquaintance and make it difficult to start up into sudden strength. For some time the society's sufficient work will be upon itself,—to know its own members, and its own mind: and this in itself will be of value. For all moral influence is multiplied by communication. Especially when men have become unsettled from their national creed, they are apt to feel themselves as Pariahs, if they remain in solitude and without sympathy, unless indeed from the range of their education they have large access to congenial literature. For such men to learn that there are hundreds, thousands, tens of thousands besides, and these good and worthy men, ready to unite with them, is in itself a great gain; it enlivens, encourages, and prepares them for noble action, indeed strengthens their moral principles and lessens the danger of

their sinking into a baser life. Thus the time spent by the society in learning to know itself would in no way be wasted, even before any farther action followed. For this and other reasons, I do not see that it is necessary here to put forth any definite suggestions as to the work which the society might undertake *first*;—that is matter for after-deliberation:—and in regard to the details of starting, I believe it suffices to say that, as in a political revolution,—where there is predisposition, a spark will light the train. If we are inwardly prepared, there are twenty ways of commencing: if not, all ways are futile.

I am aware that that will seem paradoxical to many, which I have already intimated, that the very first *work* for such a Society to undertake, is, the settling of the Bye Laws which are to regulate the rights of speech and the application of the moral forces of the community. I know it will be said: "Let these grow up gradually: things will settle themselves, as occasion requires." This may be true, where a strong religious veneration for definite authority secures the cohesion, and to a certain extent the obedience, of the society; or again, where the work to be performed is clearly and narrowly limited: in no other cases do I believe it. To a country accustomed, like England, to the unfettered license of speech at public meetings, and practically knowing nothing between these and the formality of churches, habit is no adequate guide. The barriers against invective and sarcasm and party warfare which can be easily erected in an infantine stage, will be with difficulty set up after the evils have commenced; and ever so little of this evil will be ruinous. I conceive also that it would be highly appropriate for the first members to form carefully a deliberate Programme, and circulate it at once, while their Bye Laws were under consideration. Of course there must be some Central body, to undertake this task, and, if the society is

to have any sort of unity and cohesion, there must be a single uniform principle for admission of members.

The action of the *Central* organ will presently have its chief importance in stimulating the *local* societies which would be hoped simultaneously to form themselves. Wherever an affiliated body is formed, a communication must be established between it and the centre, as all the proceedings of the body every where will be of interest to all. Although the Bye Laws should be recommended to the local bodies, no uniformity should or could be insisted on. If any of them even entirely refused to have any byelaws at all, they must be left to take their course, which probably would be a short one. It suffices here to point out, that the most ancient Christian meeting time, viz. *Saturday evening after sunset,* would during the winter half of the year be an admirable meeting time for Gentile and Jew, not interfering with any existing religions, and yet being free from business with the mass of the community.

The first Bye Laws should be concise; and when approved, should perhaps be adopted for a limited time, so as to secure reconsideration after some experience had accumulated. As for the Programme, what *else* may be contained in it, I say not; but if it at all harmonize with the views advanced in these pages, it will emphatically avow Nationality to be a bond of mankind, inferior in sanctity only to that of Family, and essential to the progress of mankind in virtue. It will deplore, that existing religion has totally disowned this bond; that existing statesmanship contents itself with defence against foreign hostility and with caring for property and the growth of wealth; and that the duty of *succouring the weaker classes of society* is neglected. It must proclaim, that, while through refinement we shut ourselves off from social intercourse with those less educated than ourselves, we neglect our duty and are selfindulgent:

that the existence of classes of population which grow up from childhood as outcasts of society is a national disgrace and calamity: that each man has a duty to perform in his own neighbourhood towards the extirpation of Pauperism, Isolation, Ignorance, Vice and Crime: that local public institutions need to be developed and reformed, for this object, and public time allotted to it, by periodical suspension of other work: that the social chasm now existing between rich and poor is unnatural and pernicious: that existing religions do not and cannot bridge over that chasm, until we all speak One Cultivated Tongue, and all enjoy the means of attaining Cleanliness, Polite manners and Knowledge proportioned to the century: that our present contrasts are not a necessity of human nature, but a dangerous disease of our own, inasmuch as there is far more of refinement and dignity in the Hindoo or the Turk, however poor, and in the North American savage, than in our neglected classes: that to reunite the Orders of the nation by Justice and Good Will is a necessary duty of a true church: that if there is to be any government at all of society, there should be no rest and no selfcomplacency until female prostitution is annihilated by rooting up *its causes:* that the nonexistence of this dreadful vice among Turkish women cries shame against Christian England; that the comparative exemption of Catholic and poor Ireland is an additional mark that the evil is not in human nature, but *in the disintegration of our social union.* Accordingly, we should avow the aim of the society to be, to preach and practise the Brotherhood of Man, and regenerate our nation into a sense of its own unity; to reconcile rich and poor, to diffuse mutual respect, and trample down the vile worship of wealth. Believing in the Unity of Mankind,—knowing that Brotherhood is a sacred and powerful truth,—we hold it no fanaticism to think that a small number of insignificant persons, advancing

with this truth inscribed on their banner, may swell into a host of God, able to conquer legions of materialists.

To avoid misapprehensions, it would not be amiss to add, that we have no thought of denying the principle of private property, although many of us may be of opinion that that principle is often illapplied, to the serious damage of things more sacred than property. But to seek for the regeneration of society by *materialistic* influences, such as enriching the poor by confiscation of wealth,—if even it were just,—would be a delusion. Our disease is *moral*. When the moral remedy comes, the labourers will soon enrich themselves, and nobody be the poorer.

As regards the *power* to aid towards these great ends, I think it manifest, that without any increase in the existing philanthropy of Great Britain, the mere union of what does exist would at once be a vast power. Not that I at all hope for a success so splendid. Many philanthropic persons are accustomed to join nothing, unless in the train of their bishop or pastor; and I expect no aid from bishops and very little from pastors. But while we should certainly fail to rally all the active philanthropy of the land, we might hope to gather up great numbers of good and kind persons, who now are wholly inactive from lack of coadjutors. I believe that nearly every town-congregation of the Anglican Church contains persons who are so dissatisfied with its government (or its no-government) that they do nothing with it, and yet feel painfully how much is needed. Many others, by thousands, send their families to Church, from not knowing what else to do, but do not go themselves. On all sides, energies are now wasted. Men have to bear the reproach of losing all philanthropy as soon as they lose the old creed; when the truth is, that with it they not only lose all coadjutors, but encounter suspicion and hostility, the moment they bestir themselves. If all the Theists of the

land, who at present are unwillingly inactive, were to be drawn out by such a society, they would probably be found to be a powerful and particularly able body;—of which we may judge by the tone of literature and of the public journals. I have no doubt that the society would be largely joined by others, concerning whom a future age may quote the words of Paul,—"God has chosen the foolish things of this world to confound the wise; and things which are despised hath God chosen, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are." I mean, many who call themselves Socialists and Secularists, of whom the latter, under their able, upright and estimable leader, G. J. Holyoake, have already attained a considerable organization, and would at once be valuable allies. I am aware that they will also frighten many away; but to exclude them for the sake of pleasing others would involve a theological creed as our foundation, and bring us back into the old vortex of sectarianism.

Supposing then that all philanthropic persons who have no ecclesiastical prejudices retarding them were to join into a new Church, they would immediately have great power for many objects now still unfeasible. Many important things could be done internally to the society. For instance, Early Closing of shops, and deliverance of Bakers from night work, would at once receive an impulse, if the members by a very large majority recommended to the whole society not to purchase after certain hours without pressing necessity,—and not to eat hot bread at breakfast. So, in opening employments to women, something important might be done by the mere vote of the Society. But I somewhat unwillingly give these illustrations, when in fact I see far higher undertakings in store, to which the Society will rise, if it earns for itself strength by purity of aim, consistency to unsectarian principle, and a severe abstinence from every form of

invective. Then every little success will give them more and more strength, and the more work they have done, the more they will be capable of doing. As soon as it becomes manifest that they are busied in doing good, and not in railing at others, those who rail at them will be ashamed; and possibly even the old churches may partially waken into a new moral life. The strife,—"who can do most good?"—is fruitful in blessing, and is by far the best way of confounding dogmatism and neutralizing enemies, when they will not be won.

Since these pages were written, I have received information of a purely religious society* in Paris, formed with a few to wider Christian Alliance, which by the geniality of its aim testifies what is the longing of our day. There is also a remarkable society formed among the workmen of Paris, for purely benevolent objects, which unites speculative republicanism to quaker gentleness. Still more recently, a society has been commenced in London by Mr. William Maccall, founded upon the confession of Theism and acknowledgment of Brotherhood. I have already mentioned a society in London which is an offset from the German Catholic Church, and names itself† Humanistic. Time, conference, and the desire of union, will, it is to be hoped, show to all of these and to the Secularists, and to all philanthropic bodies which have not a jealously limited sphere, how they may coalesce into some common action, even when they do not choose to renounce organic arrangements already formed.

* "Alliance Chrétienne Universelle": President, M. James Odier; Secretary, M. Henri Barbezat, 83, Boulevard Beaumarchais.

† It meets in 32, Tavistock Place.

§ 10. Reform of the Sunday.

I have already indicated, that Saturday evening affords an excellent neutral time for necessary meetings: and it would (if the scheme were energetically worked out) be fully occupied with *debate*, first, concerning Organization and general regulations, afterwards, concerning the Action of the Society. But one must foresee, that a question of great moment remains over,—how to use profitably one seventh part of human life, which now by the law of the land is (to the majority of the nation) exempt from common business. In touching on the Doctrines of the Future Church, I purposely omitted this topic; but it is impossible to cast an eye on the phenomena of the day, and the history of the past, without seeing that the Puritanical and Scotch Sabbath, (a theory barely three centuries old,) will not maintain itself in the future, although the political influence and wealth of England has propagated this insular notion of ours in Switzerland and in Prussia. The monstrosity of enforcing on children a prohibition to play on Sunday, and the positive evil of turning the day into gloominess to them, is conceded by some parents who in their own persons humour the sabbatarians. Evidently a like mischief is incurred by forbidding innocent sport to those adults, who from low mental development are in a sort of puerile or half-barbarous state. So soon as moral questions are debated on their own legitimate ground, many minds will espouse the doctrine, that public sports, as king James commanded, should be reorganized on the Sunday. It is, I suppose, a question of expediency, which has two sides. A large section of the population of towns, which through the week is confined to the streets, is already resolved to breathe country air on one day of the week, at least in the summer season: but, not wishing to excite fanatical hostility in a cause where Puri-

tanism and Ecclesiastism are united, they generally consent to abstain from every approach to sport. At present they are meekly demanding leave to contemplate on the Sunday the beauties of Art as well as of Nature. In any case the freedom of Sports does not concern females, nor elder men; and I here say no more upon it.

But the Intellectual and Moral or Religious employment of Sunday is too obviously of firstrate importance to be neglected by any free thinkers: and I cannot but believe, that, under the Church of the Future, "Sunday Schools," on a totally different scale and method from our present petty attempts, will organize themselves for the culture of *adults* in every species of high knowledge. Those who, when children and youths, were well taught in daily school, (as the whole nation ought to be,) would have a greatly increased capacity of acquirement when adult; and *three hours* every Sunday (which could well be afforded) spent under systematic teaching in classes,—say from the age of 17 to that of middle manhood, or 35, would then give such an enlargement of thought to all mature men, that the whole nation might be called accomplished. I see not why intellectual instruction should cease at any age; and, as far as *time* is concerned, our ploughmen and warehouse-porters might become French or German scholars and variously cultivated, even without any great industrial change affecting adults. The same hours, given in one room to Class Teaching, might be occupied in an adjoining place by consecutive Lectures on every topic which can be made part of general culture. Whether admission to these should be restricted to elder persons and to those younger ones who had attained satisfactory progress in the classes, is among the very many topics which would need deliberate review. I here only indicate the whole subject, as one of great magnitude; and add,—that, inasmuch as Philanthropy is to be

the Society's aim, and personal interest has enough legitimate sphere in six days of the week, it is to be hoped that the Society will find among its own members Teachers and Lecturers of high competence, willing to serve on the Sunday *gratuitously*. A few, setting the example, might give an impulse to this; and if it succeeded, it would be of great secondary value towards establishing the principle of no remuneration for "ministers of religion," on which I shall presently touch.

In those States of the American Union, which have already an efficient universal system of education for young people, business nevertheless commences so early, that school (I believe) terminates at the age of fifteen. In such a community a more intelligent conception of what Sunday Schools ought to mean, would be peculiarly valuable: indeed to break loose from Puritanism, if this direction were taken, might, more effectually than anything else, counteract the odious worship of wealth. In a recent year (1852), as I read, the Governor of Ohio,—the elected Chief Magistrate of a Sovereign State,—was accustomed to visit the Sunday Schools, to inspect, interrogate and address the children. Nothing but the routine of clerisy hinders great numbers of accomplished men in England from similar but higher service on the Sunday. In New England indeed it is common for ladies and gentlemen, scholars, merchants and ministers of State, to lecture in public gratuitously. America, I believe, is destined to affect us largely; and members of our aristocracy have already begun to lecture. The clergy of all denominations have hitherto impeded the use of any part of the Sunday for this most reasonable purpose: and they will impede, until a powerful combination effects it.

But the intellect is not the whole mind of man. The universality of religion, and the intensity of its action in all

the highest nations, testify to me that philosophy will not explode it, and that in the Church of the Future there will be a distinct recognition of a present God, whatever may be the forms which will take the place of our "church-service." I do not at all imagine that there can *yet* be, among members of the body which I am contemplating, any unity of opinion on such a subject: in fact I see at least two distinct lines of movement, which I shall call the Theistic and the Pantheistic. Under the latter I include the opinions of all those, who, whatever otherwise their theory, have no practical conviction that God listens to prayer and praise. It is impossible for such to join in what Theists call *worship*. Even among Theists difficult questions will arise, as to the extent to which prayer may go: but as we know how many of these, (merely in order not to bring up their families atheistically,) frequent churches which they dislike, I infer that this class of persons will no sooner come together than they will succeed in some mutual compromise, enabling them to conduct a worship in common. Pantheists on the contrary, (with whom most of the Secularists perhaps may be classed,) cannot join with them, and must be left to construct their own substitute for church worship, which, I suppose, will consist in poetical readings, moral addresses and music. Of course every Theist, who finds in his belief of a present God strength to his virtue and comfort to his sorrows, must necessarily *desire* to impart his faith to others. But when, after trying, he finds himself unsuccessful, surely his next wish must be that these others may work out their own views into their best form, and bring their system, and all its fruits, into full comparison with his, in close and friendly contact. Most assuredly, such a comparison will turn to the advantage of *that* system which is intrinsically the stronger. This must be acknowledged by all Theists who are emancipated from that intense scepticism of the churches, which

teaches that to human nature falsehood and wickedness are more congenial than truth and goodness. Of course, *if* that were true, truth would have no tendency to beat error in the long run. But also in that case no imagined regeneration could justify itself from the chances of delusion, no revelation could have any intelligible and available evidences, nor could any moral truth whatsoever have trustworthy verification.

But in acquiescing that different systems should thus work in friendly juxtaposition and mutual outward help, there is one primary condition about which both parties may justly be anxious; viz. that no outward interests, especially of a pecuniary kind, be allowed, which shall become an artificial barrier against the successes of truth, and cause jealousies and bitterness whenever proselytism begins. If, for instance, two congregations of different doctrine support each of them a minister, to whom his salary is his livelihood; the minister is liable to be reduced to sudden pauperism, if he become himself converted to another opinion, and on the other hand his salary is undermined, if the members of his congregation are converted. Now of two rival systems one or other is (more or less) false, yet both are thus artificially sustained by money-inducements; and (what is really a dreadful evil) no man is walled up by so stout ramparts *against* truth, as the man who is peculiarly supposed to dispense and extend truth. This does appear to me so formidable a mischief, that I should wish to refuse a sanction to anything like organized sects of opinion within the limits of the society, except on the strict condition that their organization should in no instance create pecuniary motives for its own perpetuation.

If the principle of gratuitous lecturing were established, as I have been supposing, it would be no great thing to extend the same to such other ministering in congregations

as might be needed. The present system of paid ministers is necessary where religion is a Literature, and it may well vanish, whenever that principle is overthrown. The modern Sermon has played out its part. It is indeed an anomalous, ambiguous thing, vacillating between two widely opposed forms of composition,—Lecture,—and (what the Bible calls) Prophecy. Now the Lecture, I conceive, ought to be entirely removed out of the Church-worship, to which it is totally uncongenial: and I am here supposing it to be provided for otherwise. A Lecture is addressed to the critical intellect. The speaker often advances his own personal opinions, and submits them to the hearer's judgment, supported generally by argument: dictatorial teaching is unsuitable. But Prophecy (which is suited to the times and places of public devotion) is essentially a dictatorial enunciation, not of the speaker's private opinion, but of moral truth acknowledged by the general conscience, and forcibly *applied* by the speaker to remind, to rebuke, to console, to encourage, to exhort. How this may be regulated, is a question important enough for separate consideration. It here suffices to say, that at no time of the Jewish or of the Christian church did effective prophecy come from an order of paid ministers, but has rather been stifled by them; yet this is that which alone ought to occupy the pulpit. When the community has been taught decorous debate without invective, the habit of selfcontroul thus gained will be a valuable step towards the healthy development of "prophecy," free from rant, coarse denunciation and personal assumption.

In saying that neither among Jews nor among Christians has effective *prophecy* come from paid ministers, and that Christianity was not originally a Literature, I do not mean to say that the paying of ministers is in any sense an abuse engrafted on either system. It was evidently coeval with Jewish *priesthood:* it was also connate with Christianity.

The call of Jesus to his first disciples led them to abandon their respective trades, and claim the right which Paul (who shunned to use it) entitles "living by the gospel." While it was impossible for Paul, with the precedents of Jesus and the twelve before his eyes, to condemn it, his moral soundness and manly independence still led him to feel the great practical inconvenience of it to the minister, whom it is apt to degrade into a hireling; nor did the danger from shepherds who care only for the fleece, at all escape his prophetic soul. Yet in no part of the New Testament do I see any adequate conception of the enormous evil about to flow from the principle, which, beginning with religious beggary, ended in prince-prelates and endowed hierarchy. The chasm between laity and clergy, which has all but ousted the laity from the Church,—the name of which is appropriated by the officers,—probably could not have existed, but for the principle of a paid ministry. Among the Quakers alone of all Christians is payment forbidden, and they alone have no distinction of laity and clergy. Protestant dissenters often profess not to admit the distinction; but the disavowal is mere theory, the practical fact is with them as with others, even when they neglect the ceremony of ordination.

Experience thus warns us of many different grounds, on all of which a paid ministry is to be deprecated in the Church of the Future. 1. It creates unavoidably a pecuniary interest in supporting error, and sustains accidental schism after its causes are past. 2. It entices persons to assume the profession of minister as a means of maintenance and respectability, and promotes jobbery which multiplies offices for their salary. 3. It forms a chasm between professional and unprofessional religionists, and thus rears a clergy, which, when duly organized together, is a hierarchy. 4. Every hierarchy has great power and a general disposition to obstruct reform, when need of reform has arisen. 5.

Contests of faction, and struggles for place, which cannot wholly be avoided, even when the post of honour is one of mere danger, exertion and loss, become inevitable, severe, and demoralizing, when honour and wealth are combined, as in a *prosperous* hierarchy. Yet a system which will be ruined by its own success is a bad system. These are surely sufficient reasons for taking every precaution against Hierarchy. The word originally sounded honourable,—"a sacred government!" but history interprets it as implying, not only ambition and covetousness in the clergy, but apathy of mind in the laity. The most recent attempt among ourselves at an organized paid clergy, is that of the Wesleyans; and though it commenced in a popular enthusiasm, its tendency has had (to say the least) a strong family-likeness to other hierarchies. When the first generation, which originated a religious or moral movement, is past away, apathy creeps on the second quite quickly enough. I believe we ought not to provide against the discovery of the fact, by keeping up an exterior of devotion or zeal when the reality is gone; (which exterior only deepens the lethargy;) but we ought to allow all the barrenness and emptiness of heart and soul to be found out. This is the next best thing to its cure, and is generally prerequisite to the cure. But when members of a "laity" awake to the evils which have accumulated, their discovery is of course offensive to a "clergy," whose power of obstruction is immediately called out.

From like causes we must expect like results. Dissimilar as are the doctrines of the old Alexandrian or Carthaginian church from the Council of Trent, from the Anglican thirty-nine articles, from the Scotch Confession, and from the Wesleyan creed, we have in all these cases very similar developments as to clerical arrogance and laic apathy. Nothing seems to me to have a chance of evading the same mischief,

unless the principle of paying church officers (except those whose service is mechanical) be entirely renounced. Of course there is no more danger from hiring a clerk or copyist, than from paying a pewopener or a printer: but *honour* and *stipend* must not be combined. For those who give, to the great objects for which the society exists, valuable thought and wise direction or instruction, let honour be repaid; but let honour suffice. To those who cannot afford to give their service gratuitously,—such service as is bought and sold in the market of the world,—to these let pay be assigned; but let it be understood that they have received their due, and that their office, though respectable, does not entitle them to peculiar honour.

Many existing Societies, scientific and philanthropic, exhibit good precedent in this matter. They perhaps pay a Secretary, and annual auditors, or a librarian; but none of these are regarded as the rulers or leaders of the society. The British Association pays the estimated expenses of experiments made at its request; but it does not remunerate its eminent contributors for their talents and work: honour is their sufficient reward. Other societies pay the travelling expenses of their officers, but it is understood that the expense has been *really* incurred in the society's service; and is not a "job" or pretence.

If any one, by his own exertions, or that of his predecessors to whom he is heir, already has the means of living, let him by all means follow his impulse to devote his leisure to moral or religious philanthropy. The same is to be said concerning the leisure hours of those, who, like Paul, work hard at some trade, live selfdenyingly, and have both time and small money to spare. Such a man in truth nobly earns a right to be philanthropic. But, I confess, I more than doubt, whether, according to a severe morality, any one is justified by strength of inward desire in casting off

his trade,—be he carpenter, fisherman or tax collector,—and expecting "to live by the gospel," as though philanthropy were a legitimate livelihood, which any one may choose who feels disposed. In individual cases the result may be eminently good, but the precedent appears to be extremely bad; and it is by the general tendency that the morality of actions is verified. Indeed such a phenomenon as an Order of "Begging Friars" would be strongly disapproved by those who look on the voluntary destitution of Jesus and his twelve disciples as a venerable and meritorious procedure. To me it appears, that philanthropic exertion is an honourable service, which we must earn a right to undertake, by first feeding ourselves and those dependent on us. An inward impulse to become a preacher of righteousness may be good and reasonable; but not all good impulses must be forthwith indulged: they must wait for lawful time and mode. If Jesus, instead of abandoning his carpenter's trade and becoming dependent on pious women who followed him, had pursued a course more like to that of Paul, making his own hands minister to his necessities and to those of the weak, he would have been able, as effectively as Paul, to testify: "It is more blessed to give than to receive:" and hireling shepherds might never have reared their head in the Christian Church. However; speculation as to what *would* or *might* have been is interminable: it must suffice for us to take warning by the evil results in the past, and avoid the causes which generated them: and among new moral rules, I see reason to place that which the Quakers alone among Christians have adopted,—the prohibition of payment to preachers and teachers and honourable Church-officers.

Socrates long ago avowed and defended this prohibition; but (it seems) he unawares extended it unreasonably to all intellectual service, as though it were less proper to pay for

mental than for bodily exertion. But his general argument, as given by Xenophon, is remarkable. "Two things," says he, "may honourably be given to another as the reward of affection; but to sell them is disgraceful:—Beauty and Wisdom." Complaints are often heard, that while the public are willing enough to pay for knowledge which is *useful*, as for that which gives help in trades and in practical professions, yet they are very slow to pay for that higher knowledge, which is in itself a worthy end of research, and for that higher wisdom, which guides the inward and outward life of man. May it not be that the dumb public is here moved by a true instinct, which feels aright what things are marketable? When the worship of wealth is abated among us,—when honour is given to the meanly clad and meanly housed, provided that they be good and wise,—when knowledge is made more accessible to the poor, and a large income is not needed for educating a family,—it will become easier and easier for the wise to abstain from making merchandize of their wisdom. Such results will indeed be laboriously won: we cannot start from them. Nevertheless, their attainment will not be aided, but postponed, by re-enacting a paid ministry: and this negative point is all that I venture here to urge concerning the reorganizing of social religion.

It may be that religion for a long while has been made *too* social a thing, and that an interval of time is necessary, during which all public ordinances of religion shall be suspended,—the juices of the soul being drawn down within, as in trees during the winter season, that the glorious life may again bud forth more richly, when nature has been strengthened by repose. If such a suspense actually were experienced, I do not think we ought to feel either alarm or discomfort, as though all religion were vanishing, unless moral depravity and general levity accompanied the pheno-

menon. A winter of solemn repose may be healthy; but not rottenness and fungous growths.

At the same time, when I consider that religion, like other knowledge, is transmissive, and that the young must *learn* to trust and to pray, to love and to praise, and that they learn greatly by example, and that (beyond a certain point) few parents can lead their children on, and nearly all desire some church-ordinances for their children's sake, even when personally independent of them;—I am on the whole led to believe, that whenever any large number of Theists become so organized, for any moral purpose, as to form personal acquaintance, they will in no long time take in hand the solemn and difficult problem of social worship suited for all men who revere and rejoice in the God of Heaven. And it is my conviction that they will find the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures, if discriminatingly used, to be a valuable storehouse of meditative and devotional thought. Neither in religion nor in morality do I believe that we can wholesomely or reasonably cut our connection with the past, wherein are the roots which feed our moral life. If we leave off deifying men, and using their instruction to supersede our own energies, we need not therefore be ashamed to acknowledge our debt to them, or seek to reduce it to a minimum. I do not advocate that Theists should retain the *name* Christian; for I am sure that it would constantly be misunderstood, and I fear that it would perpetually be bringing back upon them serious error and idle controversies. But I do advocate that they should sedulously retain from Judaism and from Christianity everything of which practical service can be made,—whether psalms or precepts, —purified from error by the same process which Paul and Watts used with equal freedom. No exclusive claim is here made. If in a Greek or Chinese philosopher, in a Persian poet or Turkish moralist, anything can be found

instructive, let all be ransacked and emptied into the Church-chest, which will borrow from all sides jewels of silver and jewels of gold, and despoil—not Egyptians only. The more promiscuously we compile, (if we exercise our own judgment, and never bow to authority,) the richer will become our inventiveness; and in us shall the saying of Jesus be fulfilled, "To him that hath, shall be added, so that he shall have more abundance." For as the very rich grow rapidly richer, so the most wealthy in religious wisdom have most power of increasing their wealth, if at least there be the stimulus of practical life. Without this, wisdom-getting is a kind of miserly hoarding, of which men grow tired: and even in pure science, the call of practical problems has been needed to stimulate high discovery. But if a spiritual church were truly in organic connection with daily active philanthropy, each part would aid to develop the other. Philanthropy would impel to discussions of morality, and constantly throw new lights on religious questions: religion would reanimate the soul of philanthropy, and by its intense energies fortify it for all selfdenial and all simplicity of individualism. Much, much will become possible, when the New Church rises into power for action: until then, is a time for preparation,—a time of lamenting and secret groaning over the unremedied evils of innocent millions,—yet a time, not of despondency, but of hopefulness; for the dawn already glimmers, and our children will see it rise.

POSTSCRIPT.

I find that in alluding to the rising societies of Germany, I have not duly discriminated those which sprang out of the German Catholic movement, from a still newer society (1852), which entitles itself "The Alliance of Mankind," or more simply, The Alliance (*der Bund*). The former was more distinctly theistic in its origin; but from various causes, it does not appear to have prospered commensurately with its beginning. However, I am imperfectly informed as to its actual strength. On the other hand, the Alliance has been zealously joined by thousands of highly educated persons, and nothing but the jealousy of the German governments hinders its extensive action on all ranks of society. This body, I understand, is prevailingly Pantheistic, and looks preeminently to Art as a religious influence. It is at the same time large in philanthropic and educational aspirations, and bent on raising the moral and intellectual state of the mass of mankind.

JOHN EDWARD TAYLOR, PRINTER,
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[*Over.*

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